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A BRIEF

ANSWER

TO SEVERAL

Popular Objections

Against the Present Established

CLERGY

OF THE

Church of *ENGLAND*.

LICENS'D.

D. POPLAR.

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THE P R E F C E.

IT's very probable that some persons, as soon as they cast their Eyes on the Title Page of this Paper, may condemn it for the smallness of the Bulk and Price, and never trouble themselves to look any further, or examin whether the Author talk Truth or Reason; or if they should go nearer, and dip into the Book, immediately throw it away again, as soon as they discover any thing there contrary to any of their own darling Sentiments or Opinions, tho like it well enough when it only blames another's : To the latter of these, if all are but of this mind, the Author desires no fairer acknowledgment of his being in the right; but yet would entreat whoever finds himself concerned, to be no more angry when he reads it, than he was when he wrote it, but as becomes a wise and an honest Man, to consider fairly and impartially the Truth of the Fact which he advances, and the Justness of the consequences he draws from it : For the former objection, the Author is so far from being mortified at it, that he rather wishes both Price and Bulk were less than they are like to be, since thereby this Paper would come into more hands, and be of more general use. The only objection that seems to deserve an Answer is, that one of no Name should be so bold to grasp at so great a Subject, which may perhaps suffer by his weak way of management. But to this it may be answered, that since there are so many little Nameless Fellows, who without any respect either to their own Strength, or Modesty, or Justice, make

The PREFACE.

bold in gross to censure and affront the most venerable and best constituted Body of men in the World, and since these are below the Anger, or perhaps the Notice of the more considerable Pens of that Communion, it may not be amiss to show how easie a matter it is even for one who owns himself of the meanest rank and merit in the Church, to answer the feeble, tho popular Objections of its impotent Adversaries, by Fact to repel Fact, and in a few pages to advance more than they can ever get clear of, in its just Vindication.

A

A BRIEF
 ANSWER
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CLERGY, &c.

HAVING a *design*, as it becomes every *honest Man*, to do all the Service I can to that Church of which I am a *Member*, and in order thereunto, to give a *clear and brief answer* to the most *plausible* and *common objections* which by several sorts of people are made against her Clergy, I think it may be proper enough to begin with this *true and strange observation*, that as *Pilot* and *Herod* were made *Friends* when they acted against the *Head* of the Church, so are those who succeed in their enmity, when they act against the *Body*, or any *members* of it. For let the *place*, or *cause*, or *pretence* be what or where it will, let but any thing be started to the *detriment* of the Clergy in general, or some one particular person, you shall see all the *Parties* who were before at *Daggers drawing* with one another, immediately very good *Friends*, and *conjured* as close as possible against one they think their *common Enemy*. *Jacobite* and *Republican*, *Sectary* and *Atheist*, *One* and *All*, as soon as the word's given, *all hands to work*, to pull the *Parsons* *Down* over his *Ears*, and well if he escapes so too from their *Hands*.

But

But since 'tis not possible, nor scarce worth the while, to be present at every *Club* or *Coffee-House*, where this makes up the greatest part of the *Entertainment*; and besides, the *Speakers* there are generally too full of themselves, and the *Stream* runs too strong to admit of any opposition; this way may be more proper to take to task the main of what they urge against that *sacred Order*, tho many of the *Objectors* will be found no more opposite to *Truth* than they are to one another; to all of which this *Paper* shall be a silent *Reproof*, if perhaps in those publick places it lies before 'em, and if they would but be at the pains to take it up and read it, they would there find an *Answer* to their *Cavils*, and such matter of *Fact* against themselves, as they would not easily be able to *Answer*.

And first, for the *Jacobites*, those we mean who are *Active*, and make a *Schism* both in Church and State, not the *Passive* who continue in our *Communion*, and tho they can't comply with the State themselves, yet behave themselves modestly and don't censure others. For those who make a *Schism*, what wonder if they have a *Schismatical Spirit*, and revile and bitterly reproach whosoever are of better temper than themselves? With these we are all *Apostates* and *Infidels*, and as verily damn'd as if we were *Circumcis'd*. We are guilty of a mortal sin, because we did not fight for those that would have cut our *Throats*, that dar'd not, or would not fight for themselves, because we went not to *Feverham* and laid violent Hands on King James when going to France, to keep him by main force from leaving us, after he both in word and writing had commanded all those who consulted him to go and submit to the then Prince, without any reserve to himself of future Obedience. After this, the *Clergy* as well as all *England* readily took the *Oaths* to those who alone cou'd then protect 'em, their present Majesties, when thoroughly settled in the Throne, by the consent of the Estates of the Realm; and for this they must have changed their Principles, if you'll believe these their good Friends, and denied whole Christianity, so that were it not for their *Worthy selves*, there would not now be Faith found in *England*. All the Arguments drawn from Reason, Necessity, Scripture, the consent of the Nation, and the great Law of Nature, to vindicate the *Clergy* in taking the *Oaths*, are nothing with them but Improvements on Parsons, Jesuitical or Popish Evasions, nothing at all of the Doctrine or Practice of the Church of *England*: And when the Convocation Book is brought against 'em, so plain that 'tis impossible to escape the force of it, then either a Convocation does not know the meaning of the

Church

Church of England, or we are not to follow them if they do; no, not so much as *Communicate* with any that do so, but they must be to us as *Heathenmen*, and *Publicans*. They'll say, these are old businesses repeated a hundred times over: but why then are they never the better for them, tho they can't answer them, but grow still more full of *rancor* and *malice*, and *bitterness* against their lawful *Governors*, or those who live quietly and peaceably under them, in all *Godliness* and *Honesty*. But still the *Clergy* have changed their *Principles*, supposing this true, as proposed at large, 'tis no *disgrace*, but may be an *Honour*: To leave *mistaken Principles*, (or rather *overstraining* such as are true) as 'tis very difficult, so 'tis very commendable, unless these *Gentlemen* are of that *Mahometan Kings* mind, who would not turn *Christian*, because it would argue *Levity*, to quit an opinion he had been born and bred in, and was angry with *St. Paul* for that very Reason. Again, why all the *clamor* against them, as if they were the only men who had altered their *Judgments*? One would think the *Parliament* had been all *Clergymen*, or else that none but such had made the *Oaths*, and by their example converted all the *Estates* of the *Realm*, and all the *Gentlemen* and *Lawyers* in *England*; whereas indeed they only continue in their *Stations*, and did what became them, and what *Authority* enjoyed them, as concluded in the *great Body* of the *Nation*.

But there's a great deal more than this to be said, both in the *Vindication* of our *Clergy*, and just reproof of them and theirs, whether we regard the *Church* or *State*. In order to which we would ask them these few Questions. First, whether they own the *Protestant Religion* to be the true Religion? (Perhaps they think, as their now Friends do, that it is all *Schismatical*, as well as our *Church*). But being so kind to them to suppose they yet own so much as that, I must desire them to go on a little further, and refresh their *Memories* with some passages which they are over-apt to forget. The second question is, whether the late King did not actually design to root out this true Religion in these *Kingdoms*, had he not gone a great length towards it, and must not have accomplished it, had he not been prevented, when there was hardly more time left than in the less mischievous old *Popish Powder-Treason*? Perhaps these *Witty* good-natured Persons have clearly forgot there was any such thing as *Magdalen-College-case*, or any *Bishops* in the *Tower*, or any *Mas-houses* erected, or any *closetting*, and *canvassing*; or think now that all these were very innocent practices, and nothing either of *Popery* or *Slavery* all the while intended. If they do, we can't help

help it, only desire 'em not to be angry with us for having *better Memories*: But if all this be not enough to convince them, what think they of their late Kings own *Hand, writing*, and that to his *Holiness* too. *Justice to Infallibility* (both alike.) See his Letter extracted out of the Register taken at *Dublin*, which none of the Party that we know of, did ever yet *deny* or *object* against. Read it your selves (if you yet believe your Eyes), and see whether these very words are not in it. *We do not disown, but that to bring back the Catholick Faith, not only in our three Kingdoms, but over all the dispersed Colonys of our Subjects in America, was our determination.* You must overlook a little *Nonsense*, and throw it on some *Irish Secretary* here, who talks of bringing that back into all the Colonys of *America*, which as to the very most of them, was never there. However what 'tis brought for, is plain, that King James had made such a *determination*.

A 3d. Question I'll ask them is, Whether the same late *unfortunate Prince* is since that time any ways altered in his *Judgment* and *Resolution* as to those matters? whether he's off of converting his three Kingdoms, and would let us now in Peace enjoy our own *Religion*, should we be so kind as to let him come back again and recover three Kingdoms, with as much ease as he lost them? Undoubtedly those who are his Friends, and yet hant quite left their *Religion*, are of that mind, and that should he return, he'd be very good for the future, and desire no more than a *Toleration* of his own *Conscience*, leaving us to ours: But whether or no they are deceived may be seen by the Treatment which those *Protestants* who went with him found at *Paris*, who could not by any means obtain a *Chappel* there for the exercise of their *Religion*, tho it was at that time so very necessary in order to deceive us. But this was in *France*. What did he do in *Ireland*, where he was in his own *Power*? We must have a care of believing the reports of prejudiced persons, *Williamitish Bishops*, or of whatever dignity or degree, tho Eye-witnesses and actual Sufferers in those *Calamities*. But sure we may still believe that Prince himself, at least when he tells what he has done against us, tho we are at our liberty in what he promises to do for us, and he in the same Letter acknowledges, nay boasts, That all the *Victories* he had obtained in *Ireland* (a small all, *St. Patrick* knows) he had still turned to the advantage of *Religion*, and hoped very soon to see it there firmly established. Bringing this as a proof of his former Intention, to have reduced the *Catholick Faith* into his three Kingdoms, and 'tis, it must be owned, a demonstrative way of arguing, and as the Letter says, there needs no other proof. But

But what's this to *England*; Might not we have enjoyed our *Religion*, and the *Scotch* theirs, tho he had left the *Irish* to their own, and so been King of three *Religions* as well as three *Kingdoms*. No, nor even that small hope remains, for he adds immediately after: *Nor will it seem hard after We shall be restored*, and may it never be till then, tho we know what we are to expect, unless any will say this Letter had any such Heretical design as to impose upon *Infalibility*, and deceive the Pope himself, as former assurances had done by the Protestants.

From whence we hope 'tis pretty plain that King *James* had a resolution to introduce Popery, and firmly to establish it in all his *Dominions*, consequently to prosecute his old design, for which his foolish Secretary was *Hang'd*, of rooting out the *Northern Heresies*, which design he has not yet alter'd.

A 4th Question I'd ask, should be this, whether in all human probability he had not accomplisht this design, had he not been just then prevented? And whether it was not the then Prince of *Orange*, our now most gracious Sovereign, who did prevent it, who preserved the true Religion, and delivered us from *Popery* and *Slavery*? This I'm sure is as clear as all the rest, and no less clear, that without a Miracle there had been no other way of Deliverance. And it must be further granted that the Interest of the *Protestant Religion*, throughout the whole *World* is linkt together with his and ours, not to add that of the *Civil Liberties* not only of *England*, but *Europe*.

Now if this be true, as 'tis all *Fact*, and must be believed by all that don't believe *Transubstantiation*; then the *Jacobites* have no other plea to excuse themselves and fault us, than this, *That better the true Religion should be destroyed and Popery firmly established, in England, Scotland, Ireland, all the English Dominions, all the World; better all Europe should be a Slave to the French Tyranny, than the English accept of a deliverer that God had sent 'em, and when they had nothing left to protect 'em, swear Allegiance to this Deliverer.*

Nay, what if 'tis after all easie to prove that the *Jacobites* do what is more than can be such an Oath as this, which we think may be made good against. For 'tis certain they do the same thing, which the Oaths taken by the *Clergy* and others oblige 'em to, and yet more, only they are so cautious to do both without any such obligation. The Oath to pay such Allegiance to the King as the *Laws* require. As for example, to serve in the *Militia*, support the Government, &c. Now all this 'tis plain is done by most of that Party in *England*, who live under the
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Protection of the Government, pay Taxes, and yet Double too, (more than we do) to defend it against him they think their *lawful Prince*, and yet tho they grumble at *Taxes*, can find money enough besides, both to raise Contributions, and maintain Conventicles, and these Taxes they all pay, except some very few of them, as appears *freely*, and *voluntarily*, because without *Compulsion*, without *Stress* and *Levy*, whereby they unavoidably own the *Authority* that *levys* it: Nay they do more, for they actually sue for *Debts*, and *Estates*, in Courts which they know *not* by the same *Authority*, and in the names of their present *Majesties*; and how they can do all this which is more than repeating a few words, tho never so *solemn*, and *promising* to do it: how I say, they can do these things with any *consistency* to their own *Principles*, and right reason, and yet fall out with our *Clergy* for doing no more, let they themselves, if they know how, give any tolerable answer.

Nor have we yet done with them, till we have had a few questions about the Church, as well as State, and the first is, Why they *Separate* from us? From the *Body* of the *Clergy*, and Church and *Holy Offices*; when they themselves have so frequently and so severely condemn'd such *separation*? That there's a *Schism* they won't deny, in both *senses*, *Faction*, and *Separation*. *Conventicle* against *Church*, and *Altar* against *Altar*. Nor can they deny that *Schism* is a greivous sin, unless grown a *Theological Scare-crow* only, with them two, as well as others. This being granted, the next Question is, *Where it lies*? whether it is of their side or ours, with half a hundred, or a hundred, or 30000? Number they'll say makes but little weight in the *Ballance* of *Conscience* or *Reason*, and 'tis granted if taken singly; but here are other stronger arguments to back it, and then 'tis considerable. What's the reason of this *Separation*? It is enough to clear them, and throw the *Schism* upon us? Do we propose any *unlawful terms* of *Communion*? But let them show where they are, or what other *Terms* than before. Are we *mistaken*? are our *Clergy* out in a matter of *Politicks*? what is this to them? Do they think the *Sacraments*, or God's word, either lose their efficacy by the *Ministrators fault* or folly, even supposing they would be so. But they did once know better. Are some *Errors* in *Dox* or in *Manners*, or even greater *Errors* embraced by many? just cause to forsake a true Church? But they have often said the exact contrary to all this, and would not be sent to the *Conventicle*, or *Jews* to convince 'em.

Let's go further, have they the example of the late Reverend Archbishop to mislead, or excuse them, who to say nothing of his known Judgment against the late Kings coming back by *French* assistance, did, as they can't be ignorant of, continue in the Communion of the Church, and that with those of our Clergy, who have themselves taken the *Oaths*, nor was he himself ever *hot* or *furious* in making *Profelytes* against them: Are any of you better or wiser than *He*, or more *learned*, or have you been more *disobliged*, or what reason or shadow of *reason* can you give for breaking *Communion* at this rate, even with *him himself*, for *tearing* and *rending* the Church of God, and all those miseries and inconveniencies which you very well know are the unavoidable consequences of such your *separation*? You had not so much as *him* to pretend for your *Head*, you must own your selves *Headless*, as well as *Schismatical*, (unless you'll have *Mr. D.* in his room). But what do I talk of *Archbishops*, or *Bishops* either, when 'tis likely enough that some of their *forward Presbyters* would be as *bad* as their *words*, and if the discontented *Bishops* should leave them, would yet act without them. Tho indeed, how can either of them act when *silenced by authority*? are not the *Presbyters* at least here more *Schismatical* and *Refractory*, even than the old *Puritanical silenced Ministers*, who submitted when inhibited their *preaching*, tho these will it seems own no such authority, they must not hide their *Gifts*, woe unto them if they do; the Church stands in great need of them, and many such excuses which they know who have used before them, tho they were never then accounted valid. Besides all this, it were but fair if in the just *Vindication* of the *regular Clergy*, we should enquire what sort of people are the chief *Sect-masters* among the *Non-Jurats*, whose *Character* would not at all credit their *Cause*. But this must be omitted whatsoever advantage it might give to the Argument, lest a Party quite contrary to these should charge our Communion with all the faults we discover, in those who were once of it, even tho now they have not left it, but hate it, as much as they themselves can do.

However thus much we must take leave to add, that many of those very persons who were most remarkably forward two Reigns since, in *Teizing* and *Vexing* all who were not of their opinion, who in the *last Reign* were wonderfully eager and busy in taking off the *Test*, in order to establish the *Church of England*; that these very men, not many of them of the *best* *Morals* and *fairest Reputation*, are now most active and virulent against the Church, which once they *disgraced* by calling her their *Mother*.

these her *dutiful Children* would now so fain turn her out oth' *Doors*.

But let their own *Lives* be what they will, you shall now and then perhaps hear some of them very deeply concerned for that advantage which *Atheism* will gain, they tell you, by the prevarication of Clergy, since there are many who seeing them *change their principles*, will conclude Religion is a *Cheat*, and *Priest-craft* from *End to End*.

Now here it shou'd be very fair, one would think to ask two or three Questions before these persons quite *unbaptize* themselves, if they are not in very wonderful haste to do it. The first, What *consequence* they can find, for such a *conclusion* as this from the Clergies practice? Why if they change their *principles* themselves, they'll say it's a sign they don't themselves believe a word of them, and if they don't believe them, why should we? But here are not above half a dozen *Fallacies* as dangerous as any *Rome* or *well* could urge, wrapt up in these few words. For first, supposing the English Clergy do change some of their *Principles* (which yet we have already *denyed*, and shall further prove to the contrary) does it hence follow they *change all*? The very utmost that can hence be *drawn* or *wrested* with any show of reason is that they may change others as well as what they have already, and who knew not that before, since they are no more *Infallible* than other folks. Again, what's a *principle* in *Policies*, in *Law*, out of their *Sphere*, to the *principles* of *Religion*, the great indisputable *points* of *Faith* and *Life*? But still to oblige them, supposing on that they had done all this, that all the Clergy who have taken the Oaths were what they are pleased to make them, *Mahometans* and *Heathens*, and believed none of the Articles of the Christian Faith (tho first, a new *Creed* must be made, with but two *Articles* in't, *Passive-Obedience* and *Non-Resistance*, strained up to the utmost indefensible heights, to which they have ever been carryed), supposing I say all this, yet are not these very *wise men* to argue on, because they are *Infidels*, so will we be too. Have they still such a *dear Love* for them as to be *damm'd* for their *Company*, or do they indeed believe no such thing as *Damnation*? Or are there none of their own *pretious party* who are still *light* to the *Cause*, and so take off the *Objection*? Or are there no Clergy in the World besides ours, or no Christianity without the Clergy (tho just before there was more in them). See but what endless mazes, *Error* and *Faction* will lead men into, where I shou'd be weary of following them, were't not in hopes to bring them out again. Tho before I leave this Head I must beg they'd resolve

resolve me this one thing, Why so many of their own party, too pious and good for the rest of *England*, have turned *publick Atheists* on this *Revolution*, or at least pretend to be so? Nay, what reason they can give that one of their *greatest and most zealous professors* could find no fitter place to *Earth* in, than the House of a notorious *avowed Atheist*, known for such all over *England*? Why their *greatest men* keep correspondence and write *Apostolical Letters* to such as these? Stiling them, *Brethren in the Lord*, when they believe neither *God* nor *Devil*, *Heaven* nor *Hell*, nor so much as the common notion of *Good* and *Evil*: Or is it the *pure merit* of being *Jacobites* that must atone for blaspheming against all the 12 Articles, breaking all the *Ten Commandments*? Nor will it be any better defence that they be ignorant of all this, than if enough for living in a *notorious Bandy-house*, or keeping a constant and intimate correspondence with some noted Highwayman, after his marks and name have been in the *Gazette*, or *Proclamation*. Those who are concerned know this *Fact* to be true, and if they deny it, it may be easily made appear to the World in a much broader manner, which is writ not to *exasperate*, but make them impartially reflect, and see whether our *Clergy* or *theirs* do most encourage *Atheism*.

Nor must the *Atheist*, or *Enemy* to the *revealed Religion* (between whom there is no great difference to be found, either in *discourse* or otherwise, as to their *notions* of, or real *reverence* for Almighty God), they must not expect to have all their *foolish objections* against the *Clergy*, crowded into this little Paper, because they are brought against *common Christianity*. All I'd desire is, that those who are acquainted with any of these *Gentlemen* would observe them close, and I'm mistaken if they don't soon find, that notwithstanding all their clamours against the *Clergy*, and whoever pretends to follow or love them, as *Hypocrites*, and *Impostures*, on the Sense and Reason of mankind, *Sophistical arguers*, and what not; they will in themselves I say, discover that these very persons who make the objection have found the way to reconcile the height of *Hypocrisie*, and the height of *Debauchery*; being for the most part as *immoral* and *fulsomly lewd* as a degenerate Age, that does not *punish* them, a *Devil* whom they don't believe, or their own perverse Inclinations, which they only follow, can make them. And for their Pretences to Reasoning, That never any Enthusiast imposed *weaker* and *sillier Sophisms* on the World, instead of *Argument*: But I shall leave these to God's Mercy on their *Repentance*, after I have challeng'd 'em to shew a *good Paper* and *thoroughly moral man*, (though that's all they pretend to) either con-

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Firmed Atheist or Deist; one that's truly *modest* and *humble* (which by their leave is a part of *morality*) and I'll promise immediately to subscribe my self of their *No-Religion*; But we must not expect any attempt so *fair* from any of their party. All the *Sense*, *Wit* and *Learning* in the World, if brought to defend the great and excellent Truths of the Gospel, which according to the Confession of those among 'em, who had a thousand times more sense than all their party that's left, did admirably tend to produce both *solitary* and *political* happiness, it must still be all *Stuff*, and *Cont*, and *Nonsense*; and by those three powerful *Words*, for ever silenced and effectually answer'd: But on the contrary, any hodge-podge of *Collections* or *Quotations*, enough to tire a *Dutch Commentator* to gather, or so much as to read over, any rabble of *nauseous objections* against those *sacred Truths*, though a thousand times already answer'd, must if they please to espouse them, be immediately no less than the *Tripes* of mankind, or the *Oracles* of Reason; though they therein commit such *intolerable Blunders*, both in *argument* and *Chronology* as a very School-boy would be ashamed of. However, this must confound all the *Tillotsons* and *Stillingfleets*, *Burnets*, and *Cudworths*, and *Bentleys* that ever liv'd, nor can they ever indeed forgive the *Clergy* (any more than answer them) for having so often and with such cleanness of expression, sharpness of invention and solid arguments merely overthrow their darling principles: though the best is, as most of them are, an honest man would be proud of their *Ill-word*, as much as *asham'd* of their *Commendation*, since I never knew any of them to whom that of *Tertullian*, concerning *Nero* on his persecuting the Christians would not exactly agree, *Non nisi grande aliquod bonum quod a Nerone damnatum*.

But enough of these, though it may'nt be amiss to observe before I leave 'em, that there are Persons of *Atheistical* principles in other *Factions* of State, besides that of the *Jacobites*, particularly that which appears most *opposite* to them; and yet in two Things (as before hinted) they very well agree: First, in their *Enmity* to the *Clergy*, and unhandsome Treatment of 'em; and then in their own (at best *Sceptical*) *Principles*. And one thing here ought not to be forgotten, that though these are of so different and contrary *Factions* in *Government*, the *Jacobite* can be good *Friends* with the *Republican*; or whatever he is, if they have but the same *No-Creed*, though he mortally hates those who are firm to *Church* as well as *State*; which seems a fair *Intimation* that is not for *Difference* of *Political Principles*, or *Changing Principles* either; that the controversy is between them, whatever the pre-
tence

rence may be, but the cause lies deeper, 'tis indeed because one *Believes a God*, and would fain make others do so, and live accordingly : the other either has *positively persuaded* himself that he does *not believe* any such *Being*, or else lives at *random*, and puts all such *matters out of his Head*, as far as his *Conscience* and *Reason* will give him leave to do it.

Not but that 'twould be as uncharitable in *Judgment*, as false in *Fact*, to affirm all those persons who don't love the *Clergy*, were inclin'd to *Atheism* : though thus much is certain, that they who *set themselves* against them, do thereby extremely encourage that *foolish opinion*, and the promoters of it. For it has been often observed, that *Religion* never flourishes long where the *regular Clergy* is not encouraged and protected, the contrary to which is the inseparable effect of *Debauchery* in *Faith* and *Morals*, and too often the fore-runner of some heavy *Calamity* and just *Judgment*. And farther it may be affirm'd with sufficient certainty, yet with modesty, that 'tis not easie to find any person of a truly *pious Life*, and exemplarily regular *Conversation*, who has not that *Esteem* for the *Clergy* which their sacred *Character* and *Office* exacts and deserves. Nay, the contrary of this appears so odious, even from the *Light of Nature*, or *custom of Nations*, that 'tis reckoned by all men a piece of unpardonable *rusticity* and *ill-manners* to treat 'em otherwise, which no sober Man will be guilty of, who desires to be thought a *Gentleman* ; But this rather makes for the *Order* in general, than for *our own* only. To come closer then, it may be now necessary to consider what is most plausibly urg'd against 'em, by those who are so far from *Atheists*, that too many of them think and call themselves, if *not the only*, yet the best and *purest Professors* in the *World*. And here a *Cloud of popular objections* appears against them, though the best on't is, that let the *Cloud* look as *black* as it will, there is nothing in it but *Wind*. The first *Broadside* is a *lowd* one, and should it hit home would sink 'em to rights without any other. " That they are all a parcel of *Jacobites*, or *well-willers* at least to that *Cause and Party*. But let's clear all now we are about it ; Their good friends urge on, That they were always of a *persecuting* and *malignant Spirit*, *Enemies* to the *power of Godliness*, *Friends* and *Defenders* of *Arbitrary Power* : *Non-resistance*, *Passive-obedience*, and all the *Engines of Tyranny* and *Slavery*. Not to add that they are *Positively-affected* (the old accusation) *Ignorant*, *Ill-preachers*, *Ill-divers*, and particularly *proud* and *sawey* to their *Superiors* and *Betters*. There's enough for once, and no doubt, too many who read this will more warily *subscribe* to the *accusation* than consi-

der the *Defence*, which if they could be persuaded calmly to do, they'd in all probability soon run to a *better mind*.

In order to which, let's first consider that which some have no more *Wit* nor *Honesty* than to urge against them, That they are generally *Jacobites* in their *Hearts*, whatever their outward pretence is.

The *Cunning* of which objection is greater than its *Honesty*, how little soever it has of both: for what has any but God to do with mans *Heart*, or how can it be judged of but by *outward actions*? and what *action* more solemn than an *Oath* in the name of God; Now it's notorious that all the Church of England Clergy now *Benefic'd* have taken the *Oaths*, otherwise they could not be in that capacity, and therefore till any thing appears to the contrary, they are still to be esteem'd firm to the Government, the *Oath of God* being upon them for that reason. But besides, who are they that have written so frequently, so clearly, and strongly for *submission* and obedience to this Government, it not the Clergy, as well dignified as others: and it's not notorious that *that one man's Book* (never the worse for having been since so severely censur'd) has converted perhaps *thousands* to the taking these *Oaths*, and he has done as much good that way as before by his many other learned and seasonable *Writings*. And if we should make an exact *scrutiny*, I doubt not but that the *Gentlemen* of the Clergy have writ much more on that subject, I believe three to one, than of the *Laity*, though we take in both *Faculties*: Nay they have the Confession of *Enemies*, who judge more fairly than these pretended *Friends*, in their *honourable discommendations*. For in *Ash-ton's Plot* did not the *Memoirs* there produce, acknowledge and complain of the *London Ministers* particularly that they were no *Friends* to their *Cause*, but the worst (that is the best) in the *Nation*: It's true, those *Papers* give a more *partial* and *unjust Judgment* of others of the Clergy, those in the several Countries of *England*, which being so large they might therein easily be mistaken. However we are thus far certain from the *acknowledgment* of an *Enemy*, in such *papers* as we may easily believe were not design'd when written to see the *Light*, that the Clergy of *London*, by much the most considerable Body of any in the Nation who bear that character; whether we consider their greater advantages or acquisitions, their *happy Converse*, or *Piety* and *Learning*; that these were generally the most *averse* to the cause of the *Jacobites*, and that according to their own observations; and this certainly is the greatest *dishonour* possible to those *Enemies* of our Countries, so 'tis the fairest and most authentick Testimony in the *Honour* and *Vindication*

dic tion of the *Clergy*, and particularly against this Calumny which the contrary party would bespatter them with, that can be desired. I shall close this Head with a consideration of the hard Fortune of *Clergy men*, and the difficult *Scenes* they have to act in an ill-natur'd World, as well in all *changes of State*, where they are generally the first who are struck at, as particularly in this. They are the middle of contending *extreams*, and are upon all occasions buffeted on both sides by those who right or wrong are angry with them or one another. The *Jacobite*, as before, says, and swears they are all turn'd *Schismatics*, *Fanatics* and *Rebels*. Others that they are, at least in their *Hearts*, as errant *Jacobites* as any in *St. Germain's*: Nay all the *extravagancies* of those men, who hate our very name and *Communion*, must be charg'd on these whom they have forsaken and left; and somewhat mischief will, the *Church* and *Clergy* must be sure to bear the blame. If the *French Fleet* with three times the number manfully beat one of our *Convoys*, and take some Ships: If their *Army* at *Land* double to ours, fall upon us and kill some thousands, though we kill of them double the number: Nay if the *Duke of Savoy*, the *Emperor*, or who will of the *Confederates* be beaten, still 'tis the *Church* is blam'd for all; that's the cause out, and till that be down, things will never be right. And now I think on it, 'tis great pity none of these *Patriots* have yet hit upon the old experiment, of selling the *Church Lands* (after the *Impropriations* are quite swallow'd, and if ever these would be digest-ed) to excuse themselves and carry on the *War* more vigorously; or at least treble charging the *Clergy*, who all over *England* have such fat *Benefices*, and lives in such peace and plenty, that they roll in *Money*, and scarce know what to do with it. But of this more anon.

The next accusation is, That the *Church* and *Clergy* of *England* are of a persecuting-malignant Spirit, Enemies to the power of *Godliness*, and so on. But before this is enquir'd into, I would desire the objectors to consider ingeniously to whom under *God* it is that they owe their present *Liberty*. Whether 'tis not to an *English Parliament*? and whether the *Parliament* be not made up of such as are profest Members of the *Church of England*, both *Laitie* and *Clergy*? whether or no this looks like *Persecution*? and whether we could or did obtain any such favour of them when they were themselves in power? After this we must have one or two Questions more, for the clear decision of this matter. First, What is *persecution*? and Secondly, What is the power of *Godliness*? and till these are decided the *Clergys Enemies* do but fight with the *Air* and beg the Question. 'Tis hard if the power of *Godliness* should be confin'd to one par-

ty of Protestants only, and all the rest be perfectly *dead and carnal*, especially when the *differences* themselves are generally about *Forms and Modes of Worship*: Now if this be certain, it follows that I may be an *Enemy* to the *extravagancies* of any particular Party, nay though they should happen to be in the *right* in the thing wherein they differ from me, without being so to the *power of Godliness*, which consists, it I mistake not, in a true and *firm Faith*, and a Holy Life, not in *words or phrases* or little *distinguishing Characters*, which many lay much more *stress* upon than they are able to bear.

Now for *Persecution*, it cannot I think be taken (in the Ecclesiastical sense of the Word I mean) with any propriety of Speech, "for inflicting *legal punishments* on such as disobey authority in any "indifferent matter, wherein they might without *sin* obey it. For Example, If authority, either from a mistaken or *just jealousy*, forbids such a sort of men from coming within so many miles of such a *City*, or from exercising therein that way of Life in which they were bred, and for their *Disobedience* to such a command they are *punished by Imprisonment* or otherwise: I can't for my Life see how this is *persecution*; a *hardship* indeed it may be, and so in some cases are *Taxes, Arrests, &c.* which, yet no man in his *right senses* will call *persecution*. This is certain, the *suffering* for obeying the *Dictates* of a *mistaken Conscience* don't deserve that name, for then all sorts of *Seits* might pretend to that *Honour* and the *Blessing* attending it, as well *Jack a-Layden* when his *Flesh* was pulling off with red hot *Pincers* at *Munster* as *Ravillac* at *Paris*. And saying that a *Man* is in the *Right*, and suffers for *Righteousness* sake, which I take to be the true Character of *Persecution* (not for *Fashion* and *Stubbornness* and disobedience to his *Superiors*) does not sure make him ever the more in the *right*: And if he be not, at best can go no higher than a *mistaken Conscience*, which where 'tis not wholly voluntary, may something *mitigate*, but can't *excuse* a *Sin*, much less make the suffering for it *commence* a *Virtue*.

Having once fix'd these Rules, supposing the *Clergy* for the removing of *Schism* and other Inconveniences had been *all* for putting the *Laws* in *Execution* against those who disobey'd 'em; this had not amounted to *Persecution*, unless those who suffer do first prove (all the different, nay *contradictory Seits*) that 'twas for the *Truths* of Christ they *suffer'd*; which I'm sure they can never *all* do, and I'm pretty confident *none* of 'em can, and which till they have done they still do nothing to the purpose.

Not that I would by any thing I've said either vindicate the too great heat, I may call it *Fury* of *some Men* in those days, against their *mistaken Brethren*. I am so far from it that I'm ready to doubt, as
our

our Saviour said to some of his best Disciples in a Case not altogether unlike it, *You know not what Spirit you are of.* We are long since but too certain who *was* lay behind the Curtain, whose *Hand* was in all this, and that 'twas the Papists play'd some of us against them, and most of them against us, both before and after; while they stood by and laugh'd at us, as they had a great deal of reason. I'm so far I say, from approving such practices as these to bring men to my mind, tho' I'm satisfi'd, and I hope on good grounds, that I'm in the right, that I much doubt whether *Force* be lawful in any matters of pure Religion, and am so far from repining at the Liberty which my (I think) mistaken Brethren enjoy to serve God in their own manner, that I frankly declare (be who will angry) I thank God I live to see that day wherein our Church has given away even the *power* of making use of any other but *Christian* and *manly arguments* to convert her mistaken Children to her Communion. But notwithstanding this concession, and my own opinion (as far as 'twill go) That such *Force* as has been us'd was neither prudent, nor so *Christian*: yet I say, it does not follow that the using this *Force* was *Persecution*, any more than that the *Samaritans* had been *persecuted* if the Disciples could have done what they desired, and actually call'd down Fire from Heaven to consume 'em. I further affirm, that far from *all*, nay or the major part of the *Clergy* of *England* were for such *prosecutions* as this; tho' *exasperated* by all that could work upon *Flesh* and *Blood*, their former *ill usage*, and probable *expectations* of having the same or worse repeated.

And here I can't help it if I make those who are too nearly concern'd in what follows angry with me, since if they are so, I'm sure 'tis only because I tell 'em the *Truth*, and that a *Truth* necessary for the *Defence* of that good cause I have undertaken, and seasonable too considering the present unchristian *animosities* between them and us. The substance whereof is, "That never was there any Sect of Men who had (I say not *Law*) but so much as *Power* in their Hands, who have been so moderate in it as the *Church of England*. Never any whole practices, principles, and expressions have not farther transgressed the bounds of Christian moderation: Nor do I desire 'em to believe one word of this till I have prov'd it by an Induction from all sorts of Protestants here in *England*, who either have had *Power* in their Hands, or even the bare prospect, or sometimes so much as desire of it. What I bring shall be *Fact*, and as far as I know, *authority*; and let those who find their parties *pinch'd* blame them and not me, who am not the Author of the *Facts* or Sayings, but *Relater* only.

We must be forc'd to begin with the *Presbyterians*, and see how they manag'd the Power when they once got it, (by what means we'll not now enquire) both in *Scotland* and *England*.

In *Scotland*, it's certain the *Discipline* of the *Kirk* was higher and more severe than any that was ever practis'd by any *Christians*; u. less perhaps the *Inquisition* it self. For whoever disobey'd their *Summons* and refus'd to *compeer* before them, continuing in that refusal, were *excommunicate*, and that once done, if any of their *Friends*, or nearest *Relations*, *Wife*, *Husband*, *Child*, *Father*, or whoever did relieve em, tho' but with a bit of *Bread* or cup of *Water*, they were also *excommunicated* for the same: If this was not in effect a *Sanguinary* as well as an *unnatural Law*, I know not what was; and no such I'm sure was ever made by any of our *Communion*. But no wonder they did this to private persons, when they pretended their power reacht even to *abrogate* Acts of Parliament, and discharge *Subjects* of their obedience; than which more was never attempted either by *Pope* or *Council* in all the height of their madness.

There can hardly be more publick Acts than these, but if we are for seeing them or worse reduced into *practices*, nothing can ever flye higher than the *Covenant*, by which they swore to destroy *anichristian Prelacy*: enjoyn'd by them both in *Scotland* and *England*; and on the penalty to those who *refused* or but *deserred* the taking of it, of being esteem'd *Enemies* to Religion, to the King and Kingdom, and *Confiscation* of all their *Rents* or *Profits*; being made incapable of any *Office* or *Benefit*, appearing before the Parliament, and besides all this, receiving such *further punishment* as should be thought fit.

Pl not yet insist on particular passages or instances only, but first make use of *publick acts*, by the *wisest* and *greatest* of their party; and undoubtedly after the most *mature deliberation*.

Of which kind was the *Ordinance* of Parliament for putting the *Directory* in *Execution*, which expressly enjoyn'd, "That if any person or persons should at any time after the date thereof, use, or cause the *Book of Common-Prayer* to be used in any Church, Chappel, or publick place of Worship, or in any private place or Family within the Kingdom of England, &c. every person so offending should for the *First offence* pay the Sum of Five pounds, for the *Second* Ten, for the *Third* suffer a whole years Imprisonment without *Bayl* or *Mainprize*. This is *home*, and 'tis hard that those who refus'd this Liberty of Conscience, nay even to the King himself, even in *private Families*, and did this without any legal authority or just power, should yet complain of *Severity*, when never

never any thing like this was required of them by the severest Laws that ever were made against 'em. Nor was this a *Bugbear* only, but actually put in Execution against those who disobey'd it. Nor will I relate any of those invidious Instances which might be given of the cruelties and hardships the *Clergy* then suffer'd for the sake of their Consciences.

But were the *Independants* any milder when they got into authority and power? Tho' they pretended they would be, we don't find it; for when *Oliver* had turn'd his Masters the *Presbyterians* out of doors, the *Episcopal Clergy* still suffer'd; nor could they by any means be allowed to serve God as their Consciences directed them; even tho' Address was made to *Cromwell* by those for whom he pretended to have a great Esteem, to obtain this Ease, which was then granted to the *Jews* themselves, (who 'tis said, were to have had *St. Paul's Cathedral* sold to 'em for a *Synagogue*,) and tho' such Liberty was once promis'd 'em in a good fit by the *Usurper*.

Well then, were the *Anabaptists* any better, when they had any hopes or appearance of getting the Reins, a great part of the Army being of that opinion? I doubt we shan't find 'em so; for to say nothing of their Government in *Munster*, the only place I ever heard of where they were absolute Masters, all those who remember 'em at that time of our Troubles, give such an account of their behaviour as seems far enough from any such moderation. They not only stil'd the then Rulers, "Apostatical, illegal, tyrannical and a Sodomitish Generation. Wherein they might not be much mistaken, but positively talkt in their Pulpits, particularly at the Funeral of their great *Pendarvis*, "That the Lords people must now be "a Bloody-people, that they must up and be doing the Lords work, "it being not now the Dispensation of the Lamb (true enough with them) but of the Lyon: and this not a Hot-brain'd Zealot or two amongst 'em, but one and all was the Word in that great multitude.

I have given yet but few particular Instances, having confin'd myself more to the actions of whole parties, and their management towards our Communion; especially of the two former. What work should I then make, if I did but dip into the most famous and authentick Sermons and Writings of those distracted times; which to read would make one suspect some body had imposed upon our Fore-Fathers, and left such expressions in their Books and Names, as the Honesty and Good nature of an Englishman could never be guilty of, nor any other except *Canibals* or *Mad-men*. 'Twas but a moderate expression which *Whitlock* mentions of *Bastwick*, when call'd to give in his Answer concerning the Bishops, in comparison

of those that followed ; “ That the Bishops were neither Servants
 “ of God, nor Servants of the King, but *Servants of the Devil*.
 Pretty near akin to the moddern Ballad-singer who seems to take
 the hint from hence, when the wretch has the wickedness to say
 of the reverend Body in gross, “ Those *Fathers in G d* are *Sons*
 „ of the *Devil* But to return, Hogs, Dogs, Wolves, Beasts,
 Priests, Idolaters, Popes, unclean Birds, Antichrists, Robbers, Persecu-
 ters, Murderers, Devils Incarnate, were some few of those many
 handsome Titles bestowed upon ’em : (did they ever hear or read
 such of them in our *Pulpits*, or Books, tho’ they chuse out the
 most railing ones, as they call it, that can be found in *England*)
 Nay, Mr. *Cafe*’s Zeal went so far, as roundly and positively to as-
 sert in the Press that they had sinn’d the *Sin* against the Holy-Ghost;
 which we hardly dare assert even of the *Regicides* themselves, how
 fair soever they might be for it. We’re those for *Toleration*, who
 reverently tell their auditory, tho’ a whole Parliament (House of
 Commons I mean,) that this would be no better then “ Fight God,
 Fight Devil ; Fight Christ Fight Antichrist ; and that Liberty of
 Conscience, falsely so call’d, would in time improve itself into Li-
 berty of Estates, Houses, *Wives*, Souls and Bodys ; and that the Devil,
 not Christ has his Throne in the pretence of Conscience : Is it
 much of the Spirit of the Gospel, or the power of *Godliness* to preach,
 “ That when the Bishops could not be *preach’d nor pray’d* down,
 “ (wherein they were very right) that what the Word could
 “ not, the Sword must do ; or as other Episcopacy must not only
 be *pulled up*, but the Bishops *hanged up* before the Lord. Or as *Cafe*
 again, least the Parliament should not have been eager enough,
 “ Cursed be he that with-holds his Sword from Blood.

But I’m weary and ashamed, and pray God to convert those
 who applaude such language as this, and are still of the same mind.
 I know here’ll be objected to all this, that *Recrimination* is no very
 fair way of *arguing*, since it does not clear me from a *Fault*, that
 I prove another is *guilty* of the same ; and besides, that all this is
past, and ought not to be *ript up again*, since it does but *exasperate*,
 and widen the *breach* among *Protestants*, when we have most need
 to be united against the *Common Enemy*. To the first, it may be
 replied, that *Recrimination* is at least a good argument, *ad*
hominem ; sufficient, and indeed the most proper, to silence the
Objectors, when we prove they are guilty of the *same things* where-
 of they accuse us. But yet more : These things are not brought
 purely to *recriminate*, but to prove the proposition just now as-
 serted, That *our Church and Clergy* when in *power*, had been more
 moderate than any other sort of people, which was necessary to
 their

their *Vindication*, and which I hope is sufficiently made out. That all this is *past*, we grant, and have reason to *thank God* that 'tis so, and we hope 'twill never *come again*. But they never were in *power* before or since, here in *England*, and, therefore we must be forced to look so far back for *Instances*, and besides what they object against our *Clergy* is also *past*, unless they think themselves *still persecuted*, and yet our Church is still uppermost as much as ever; and, 'tis the same way that *Marvel* takes, who goes back as far as the *Star-chamber*, and beginning of the *Wars*, to reflect on those of that *Character*. For widening *Breaches*, 'twere heartily to be wisht those were more careful how they did it themselves, who object it against others: Or do they think the *Breach* may lawfully, or can possibly be widened of our side and not of theirs, by their continued unhandsome *Reflections*, both publick and private, which lest we should make it yet *wider*, we must by no means *wipe off*? But there are two further *Reasons*, which we wish were not true, but being so, will come more home than any of the *other*. The first, That we never yet heard of so much as one single person concerned in the *worst* and *blackest* actions of those Times, that ever declared they *repented*, but rather *gloried* in 'em. I'll instance in that *horrid Villany*, which makes any true Englishman *shudder* to hear it, the *barbarous Murder* of the best *King* that we ever had. It's true in the last two *Reigns* they usually *shuffled* it from one to 't'other, and were not arrived to that height of *Impudence* publickly to own it, but now in open and avowed affront, not only to the *memory* of that *Excellent* and most *Pious* Prince, and to his *Royal Relations* now *Reigning*, but to the *Laws* of the Nation, for which they pretend so high a *Reverence*, to say nothing of the Church, which they'd only laugh at, they dare *Feast* and *Revel* on that day when all good men meet together to *detect* and *bewail* the *Tragedy* acted upon it, and beg of God that that *Innocent* and *Royal blood* may not light upon the Nation. These *worst* of *Barbarians*, baser than *Cromwell* himself, won't let that poor Prince rest in his *Grave*, and this not only the old *hardened Wolves*, if any of them are yet left, whose *muzzels* were *dipt* in his *Blood*, but even a *young Litter*, bred up to *yelp* to the same *Nore*, as if they were *affraid* they should not have a share in their (impenitent) *Fathers Damnation*. A just indignation has forced these expressions from me, which none I'm sure will think too much, who is a true member of the *Church of England*; and I doubt not but all who are so will joyn with me therein, when they consider the *Cause*, and see *Ludlows Letter* and other Pamphlets of the same *brand* still *swarming*, and so much made.

made of, and greedily bought up by some men, as if they would fain ~~re-act~~ the Crime were it in their powers, or were afraid we should suspect them of *Repentance*: and while they won't forget these things, but rake anew in the Martyrs ashes, they must blame themselves if we remember 'em too, and censure 'em as they deserve.

Another Reason why these old things are brought upon the Stage again, is because the same party, where they have had power, have gone as great a Length as they could or durst, towards the same practices. Scotland led the Dance last time, and what they have done now is not unknown, and they in vain faintly palliate. Are all the Crys and groans of the injur'd and oppressed we have heard from thence only form'd in our own Fancies and Imaginations? Or has not Jack been at his old Sport agen; doing the wark o' the Lord in the Deel's name, and Mobbing all such as would not come over for the Kirk at the first word of Command? Which was longest ago, the pretended persecution inflicted on others by the Episcopal party, or this real one suffer'd by them from their adversaries? I know it has been said those Ministers were all Ignorant, Scandalous, Jacobites, and what not? But had this been true, are the Rabble fit Judges? for into their Hands most of them were deliver'd. And this by the connivance, nay encouragement of the greatest men amongst them; whose names will undoubtedly be rendered sacred to posterity for their kind Lists to that blessed Reformation there. Did taking the Oaths excuse 'em? no fear of that, and least the Rabble should scape some of 'em, Proclamation after Proclamation must be issued out, and all those who would not plainly tell God-almighty, "That he had for a long time restrained the presence of his Spirit in the Conversion of Souls in poor Scotland, must turn out without any Excuse, or Delay, or Remedy: (as far as the party could do it, and if any of 'em have had any ease since, no thanks to them:) Nor are these private things, but publick and notorious Transactions, that can no more be deny'd than defended. Did not the Mob really turn out great numbers of the Episcopal Ministers; Did they not complain long without Redress, tho' plunder'd into the bargain, and many of 'em besides in danger of their Lives, after the highest Indignities certainly, that ever were offer'd by any Christians to a Christian-Clergy: And were not the Actors rather encouraged than punished for it: Were there not such Proclamations; such a Fact, even upon the Lords day as if so ordered on purpose as an affront to all regular Christianity? If this can be deny'd, let it, if not, let those concern'd confess that even such as wou'd be esteem'd the most moderate party among all these who Dissent from us, have us'd

our Church and Clergy worse, and that even lately too, and without Law, than ever we did theirs : Nay, tho' we take in the Reign of *Hilton* too, for even then tho' the Mob used to make bold with their *Meetings*, they neither offer'd violence to their *Persons*, nor plundered their *Houses*.

But tho' I'm got so far into *Scotland*, let none expect I should foul my *Paper* with any of the *Flowers of Scotch Eloquence* ; For I would more gladly have seen that Book answered any other way than by requiring one *Century* with another, there being such gross and foul things in both, that 'tis pity I think either ever saw the *Light*, and besides, I believe those in *England* do as much excel the *Scotch* in *Preaching*, as in *Temper* and *Living* : Tho I confess 'tis not easy to forbear an angry *Smile*, when one finds some people, after having been so often and justly blam'd and ridicul'd for't, still persisting in and affecting the same Error. And 'mapt to think that when Mr. *H---y* of *Cambridg* but this very last year was prevailed upon to print his *Gospel-Feast*, 'twas some *Enemys* of his, not his *Friends* tho' he tells us so in the *Epistle*, that set him about it : See but his *Bill of Fare* else, whereof he says his *Feast* is composd, and let not the Reader call me *profane* for reciting it, whatever he thinks of him for first publishing it. p. 53. The *Supper* says he, is serv'd up in this following Account. "Milk for Babes ; Meat for Strong-men ; The *Lamb* of God ; "The fatted *Calf* for *Prodigals* ; The *Marrow* of Rich-Forgiveness ; The *Feast* of Holiness, or the Bunch of *Hyssop* in Sanctification of the Spirit. The hidden *Manna* of Election ; The Royal *Dainties* of Assurance ; (among which he reckons the *White Stone*, p. 109. tho' very hard meat.) The *Evangelical-Honey* on dropping *Free Grace*. "The Fatness of God's house ; The *Morsel* of Hope ; The Full-meat of Contentment ; The *Oyl* of Joy ; "The Continual Diet of perseverance : and a great deal more on't. And hereonce for all, let no Reader say I'm too bitter in this *Paper*, since I let pass even this with more disdain and pity than *Anger*, tho' 'tis not I confess easy to refrain, when such stuff is call'd the only *Spiritual-Preaching* ; when this is the *Fruit* which, as he tells his Hearers, the *Souls* of so many have lusted after, and no doubt esteem these better *Sermons* than any that have been preached either at St. *Lawrence's* or at St. *Mary's* at least these 30 years.

But 'tis now time to have a little Discourse concerning th^e two dreadful *Bugbears*, *Non-resistance* and *Passive-Obedience*, and the forwardness of the English Clergy to encourage *Papery* and *Tyranny*. And here, were we to deal with *adversaries* that *ingenuity* could

work on, one would think a frank and ingenious *acknowledgment* of a piece of *humane frailty* should be enough to *atone* for it at the same time 'twas confess'd : but it seems their crime must be meer *malice fore-thought*, and not *chance medly*; and nothing but absolute *Perfection* will serve their Turn, either in *Politicks* or *Morals*. How fairly and publickly have the *Clergy* of our Communion acknowledged, that those *points* may have been *strain'd* too high? And has not Dr. Sh---- himself own'd as much, when he says in Terms, "That the preaching up *Prerogative*, and *unlimited Passive obedience* so much as it has been of late years, has been a *prevailing mistake*, tho' impos'd by such great *authority* that he thinks 'twas *pardonable*. But it seems some people will neither give the *Clergy* leave to be *mistaken*, nor *amend*, tho' they themselves will take leave never to *amend*, tho' 'tis plain they are so often *mistaken*. And since that seems their *final Resolution*, we must have a little more talk with 'em on this Subject.

It's certain all Christians, even those who make the Objection, do in some sense hold both those principles, now, by many, in gross condemn'd; I mean *Non-Resistance*, and *Passive-Obedience*. Are we not to be *Subject* to the *Higher-Powers*, not for *Wrath*, but *Conscience*: And, as in *Masters*, not only *good* and *gentle*, but also to the *froward*; or is not this still as good Scripture as ever? Does it become a Christian for every slight *injury*, *conceiv'd*, or really *infern'd* by *Superiors*, to fly out into *opposition* and *Rebellion*; and at this rate, would their be any *peace* in the *World*; any settled *Government*, or ought besides *Anarchy* and *Confusion*? Does not the *Christian Religion* teach us rather to *suffer* than to *count* it *Evil*? and have not these very persons who make the Objection often pleaded, even in *Terms*, their *Passive-Obedience*, and submitting to what they thought unjust *Penal Laws*, as an excuse for not *actively* obeying: Nay, carrying this so high as if they thought those *Laws* thereby entirely *satisfi'd*, tho' the same way of arguing would excuse the greatest *Malefactor*: Thus much then must be granted, that there are such things as *Passive-Obedience*, and *Non-Resistance* in a *sound sense*, and that they are great *Christian Duties*, own'd and acknowledged by all parties, tho' generally more *pleaded* by those *below*, and more *prest* by those *above*. They were *urg'd* and *press'd* formerly by those now so *eager* against 'em: For in the late times, when the *Anabaptists* were like to get uppermost, *our Texts* were presently brought to *bear* against 'em: They were told (in *Hugh's* his Book before mentioned, *Edward's* and twenty others) that they ought not to "despise *Dominions*, speak *Evil* of *Dignities*, or resist the *Powers*. They were minded of *prophecies*;

cies; "That in the last Days perillous Times should come; For "Men should be Lovers of their own selves; disobedient to Parents, (Natural, Political, and Ecclesiastical) Dispensers of "others that are good, Traytors, Heady, High-minded, and " (which is the misery, adds my Author) all this under a *Form* "of *Godliness* without the power: But 'tis well, as he says before, that the "*Ranting Royal-Enemy* was well humbled already, else one would have suspected these *malignant Texts* had been brought by them to keep under the honest *Presbyterian* and *Independant*, (as he styles 'em,) "or which comes to one, the *Godly* not of their *persuasion*.

But this has not only been *prest* upon others, by those in power, but also pleaded by them in subjection to vindicate themselves, and that I believe, very near in the full *extent* that it has been *strain'd* too by any in our Communion. The Dissenters from from the establish'd Government, tho not so many as they fancy, must yet be own'd a too considerable *part* in the *Body* of the *Nation*: These were for some time severely enough handled by the *Encouragement* and expresse *Directions* of those at *Helm* in *former Reigns*; and that in several cases, as they thought, *contrary* to *Law*: as the pulling down their *Meeting-Houses* by the Rabble undoubtedly was. Yet they bore all, they still pleaded their *Inoffensiveness*, *Submission*, and *Passive-Obedience* in all their *Apologies*. They would be thought in earnest sure in this *Plea*, and that 'twas not want of *power* only to *resist* which made 'em not do it, but because 'twas really against their *Consciences*; otherwise they dealt not fairly either with the *publick* or the *Government*, and this was only a *fallacious*, not a *true Reason* of their *Submission*. Nay, did not the *Non-cons.* of one of the most considerable *Cities* in *England*, in their address to *King James*, assure him upon the Word of the *Godly*, "That "they abhorred all *Rebellion* upon any *pretence whatsoever*; not urging as some have done, the Instance of *Hezekiah's Rebelling* against the *King of Babylon*, in *excuse* and *defence* of it.

Besides this, there are two things to be urg'd in *mitigation* of a mistake among our *Clergy*, if they have too many of 'em, in their turns, *over-strain'd* such principles as these in the late *Reigns*; and those are *obligations* to the *Crown*, and the just *apprehension* they had of the contrary extreme, and the *Doctrines* which encourage 'em. As for the first, 'tis very well known how *politickly* and closely the *State* united the *Church* to it self at the *Reformation*; for which indeed who can blame it: had their been, at the same time, but such just *provision* made for the *Clergy* as

their office deserves, that Poverty might not have render'd too many of em both contemptible and ignorant. However, the chiefest of the Profits and Honours were reserv'd in the States disposal; and besides we have had, and thanks be to God, still have, such Princes, as protect and love them. Now who can blame them if they are grateful to Benefactors; and what good Man will not pardon them if this Gratitude should in some Instances have carry'd them too far in compliance and obedience; tho' never near that length that good A. B. Crenmer went before them; or at worst (utterly to knock this objection down) was it not a more noble and handsome error, than to court the Mob, to stand Cap in Hand to our Sovereign Lord the People, it matters not much whether with Captain Tom or Old Noll or the Head of 'em; which extreme it's certain the contrary party has run into, and still continen in: the preaching, and principles of some men being turn'd exactly to make the people, and humour the Rabble.

And twas the just apprehensions of wise and sober men, that the same party were driving on the same Projects they had formerly, which yet further induc'd many of our Communion (certainly Lay Gent. as well as of the Clergy) to lean too far to the contrary extreme. They knew the only way to make a crooked thing strait, was to bend it farther on the other side than its natural posture; and if they did over-do, and strain it a Thought too far, not resting in the exact individual Arithmetical mean, this however only argues 'em men, and fallible, and was an Error so near the Truth, that is deserves and exacts a much softer treatment than has been given it.

Especially when they found the same principles and practices on Foot, which had not half a Century before, reduc'd us into so much confusion and misery. When 'twas broached, and particularly believ'd, "That the power was in the people; not only fundamentally, or as to specification; neither of these would do the work, but even actually: so that they might call their Masters to account as often as their many-Heads and no-Brains thought convenient. When the Bishops were yelpt against as lowdly as in Forty-One, and Lampoons against 'em almost as common as Gazettes, and the hopes and expectations of the adverse party so full and high for the utter ruine of Episcopacy, and re-establishment of their selves or nothing. And whether this was not, for some years after Eighty, the very Creed of the Faction? whether this were in the least doubted among em, and were not the common subject of their most pleasing Discourses, I leave to their own Consciences and notorious matter of Fact to testify against em. I say the Faction,
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on purpose to exclude all those, who tho' they *dissented* from our Church, yet behaved themselves *Christianly* and *modestly*; who meddled not with matters above their own *Sphere*, nor with those that were given to *change*, and for these reasons deserve as much *charity* and *pity*, as the others sharp *reproof*, and open *rebukes*: It being certainly their *eagerness* and *fury* which drove so many well-meaning men, who lov'd their *Liberty* and *Country* as well as they could do, into the contrary extreme: They thought with reason enough, that *absolute Monarchy* was to be prefera'd before *absolute Anarchy*, a bad Government before none at all; and if they threw themselves at the Feet of a *Lion* to avoid a whole *Kennel* of *Hounds*, who can blame 'em.

After all, there remains this still to be added in their just defence; that that as they never dealt so *severely* with others' *Consciences* as they have done with theirs, so neither did they ever carry *Arbitrary Power* so high as their *adversariys*, who *open* so hotly against 'em under that pretence. And this will appear if we go back either to the *Times* of our *Fathers*, or those which we ourselves can yet remember. Ship-mony 'tis true *might* be, and appears, actually was, *arbitrarily* impos'd on the Nation, by the King only, on the advice of some great Lawyers, on an eminent Exigency for *once* and no more: But were not *Taxes* after *Taxes*, monthly, yearly *levy'd* by the *Tail* of a *Parliament*, nay the very *Rump* of that *Rump*, when not only *King* and *Lords*, were struck off, but at last all even of the *Commons*, that would not go *through-stitch* with whatever *Oliver* or his *Master* would have 'em. But to take yet a *larger Compass*; was not the *Covenant*, as before, impos'd as *arbitrary* as any thing can be imagin'd, and what party was't that impos'd it, and almost universally took it; or do they think the King alone can be *arbitrary*, and 'tis not in the power of any other part of our *Constitution* to be so, if they never so much *desired* it, or let them do what they would. Well, if the case be there, they would still be cast, though we must come a little lower to *convince* 'em. For can they with any modesty affirm that the *Dispencing-Power*, which in effect *destroys* and *vacates* all *Law*, was ever so generally *acknowledg'd* and made use of by our *Clergy* as they were in the latter end of the *Reign* of the late *K. James*? Were ever they such *Enemies* to *Parliaments* (who have so often and so deeply oblig'd 'em) as the *Regulators* were, who would have alter'd the very *Essence* of 'em, and made the *King*, not the *People*, the *Electors*; which would have made it a *Court-Parliament* with a witness, of which many of the same persons are now so much *afraid*; and of which side were those *Regulators*.

lators, of theirs or ours; or do they think our *memories* are so bad that we have already forgotten. I expect 'twill be said, they only *accepted* a *Benefit* offered 'em, and were *thankful* for it, without acknowledging any thing of the *Dispensing power*: But this seems very *trivial*; For had they not their *Liberty* only by that *Power*? and must they not as *fairly*, tho' *virtually* thereby own it, as if they had said as much in *Words* at length? Suppose one *Robb* upon the *High-way*, and gives me a part of his *purchase*; am not I co-partner with him if I know of the *Robbery*, and yet I not only accept it, but am thankful for it: even supposing to bring the parallel closer, the *true man* who was *Robbed* might have chanc'd to have us d me hardly in some former *Instances*? No there's a more ingenious excuse than this, which some of 'em have made, and which better becomes those that have need on't; "That by the severe usage they had formerly met with, they were at first hurry'd into the *contrary extreme*, and pusht a little beyond their *Duty*: This we'll accept, because 'tis but *humane* to do so, but then they must remember to let it *pass* too on other *occasions*, and to hold for us as well as them; and that our *provocations* were higher than them, as well as without and against all *Law*, has been already prov'd, and cannot be deny'd.

But lest they should again forget all this, and so many thousand yards of *Addresses*, as if well manag'd, will be yet sufficient to supply *St. James's* and *St. Germain's* too with, till the War is over; I must beg leave to refresh their memories with a few remarkable *passages* in those *Papers*, which by no means ought to be lost, whereby I'm mistaken if it don't appear that our *Church* and *Clergy* are not the only persons who can *Flatter Princes*, when they are kind to 'em and oblige 'em. In these they own d *K. James* to be "their *Covering-Cherub*, under whose refreshing shadow they promis'd themselves *Rest*: and (not to be ungrateful) promise him also, truly to *serve* the *Interest* of his *Power* and *Greatness*; "That he had taken care as a *Common Father* for the good of all his *People*; "That he had been in the whole Course of his *Reign*, a *wise* and *merciful King*: (much alike, and both just as true as what follows) "That they are for *Monarchy*, as the only ancient *Legal* and *rightful Government* of the *Nation*. Others thanking him "for his *transcendant* and "unparallel'd *Favour*: the latter indeed it might be, for a *Popish Prince* to *Tolerate* his *Protestant Subjects*, but for the former 'tis as 'twas intended. They have made a *Moses* of him for this their wonderful Deliverance from the *Penal Laws* *Egyptian Bondage*; and for the same with him "all the *Divine Beatitudes* of *God*.

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They acknowledg that 'twas " Gods miraculous Providence " which had preserv'd him by *Sea and Land*, on purpose for this " great work ; to do greert Services, for which the Almighty " had design'd him : and this alone is the *Harp* to charm down evil " *Spirits*. That the utmost drop of their *Blond* and expence of " their Fortunes should be at his *dispose*. That they will most faith- " fully and ambitiously serve him with their *obedience* and *Loyalty*. " That he's the rightful Father of his *Dominions*. That they'd " make him Great throughout all the World. That he was a " Prince designed by Heaven for the highest pattern of *Royal Good- " nefs* and true *Policy* ; and that they'd emulate all his other Sub- " jects in *Loyalty* and *Obedience* : That he was certainly the most " tender and affectionate Prince that ever sway'd the Scepter of his " Empire, outdoing all the *expectations* and *deserts* of his Subjects : " and even here in *London* " That with a constant *Emulation* they ll " strive to be most forward and faithful in their *Allegiance*. Praying, " that the *Blessing* of Heaven may ever *Crown* him ; that he may have " a long, a prosperous, and a glorious *Reign* : That long may live " *James* the *just* ; Nay, that he may live for ever. Nor let any " think I wrong 'em in one expression, for they may find all these, " and I believe yet grosser in the *Addresses* for *Burry*, *St. Edmonds*, " *Norwich*, *Lancashire*, *Effex*, *Exon*, *Leicester-shire*, *Gloucester-shire*, " and *Staffordshire*.

Well then might *K. James* afterwards declare, " That he was " encouraged by multitudes of *Addresses*, and many other assu- " rances of his Subjects, to see this his *Declaration* preserved with- " out *Destruction*. And we may hence observe the *Injustice* and par- " tiality of the two opposite *Factions* in the Nation, one of which ; " made it a great objection against *K. Charles* the 1st, and his Go- " vernment, that he dispens'd with the *Laws*, and sav'd a few *Priests*, " who were accus'd of no other *Crime* but their Religion, and yet " they could encourage and accept the same *Dispensing Power*, in a " much higher and notorious manner, when they themselves were " concern'd in it. The contrary party complain that in the *present* " *Reign*, men of *Republican Principles* are too much encouraged ; but " let these look back to the latter end of their own dear *K. James*, " and see who were then uppermost ; What sort of Men were in " his *Offices*, his *Councils*, his *Closets*, and this will for ever silence " that objection, if they have any *modesty* left.

'Tis now time to proceed to the next *accusation* of our Clergy ; " that they're of an *ill Life*, and particularly some sort of people " blame 'em as over-proud to their Superiors ; sawcy with their " Betters, carrying it highly even towards *Gentlemen* : the old coun- " tain of *Marvel* against 'em.

For that of their *Living*, 'tis certainly made at as unlikely a time for the Objectors as is possible, since even the Clergy's most bitter enemys must acknowledge that never were the Episcopal *Sees* better filled since the *Reformation*; and consequently that all the care imaginable will be taken, as in fact 'tis plain that it already is, both to hinder persons of *bad Morals* from entering into the Church, some of which have in this Reign in vain attempted it, and in justly censuring such as have been *scandalous* and *negligent* in their *Sacred Charge*. But further, if we may judge of the rest by those of this City, it must be acknowledg'd that never were the English Clergy more remarkable, either for *good Learning*, or *Exemplary Lives*: and most of the Cities and chief Towns in *England* will I believe, present us with much the same *observation*. Nor is't to be at all admir'd, if in some *obscure Villages*, where the Clergy hardly can keep the Post of an *ordinary Farmer*, the meanness of the Circumstances and company should in some Instances, debase their *minds*, and there should be found of 'em either less learned, or religious. And besides this, considering the *miserable provision* that's made for their subsistence in so many Parishes, what wonder if men of worth are not so forward to run into such *Holes* and *starve* there; consequently that the *people* and *patrons* must be content with such as they can get, not to add that 'tis oftentimes with them the *worse the better*: As it may happen too sometimes in greater places, where all's left to *popular Elections*, where 'tis no wonder if Mr. *Mob* should chuse one as like *themselves* as they can possibly find, and as we have seen they have really done in several Instances. If to this we add the constant and dangerous effects of a long *Peace*, and the general *decay* of *Piety*, which has been for some years *growing* upon the Nation, which can't be suppos'd *wholly* to have escap'd all the *Clergy*, and that notwithstanding all this, they may compare with any *establish'd Clergy*, either past or present, of this or other Nations; take I say, but all this together, and 'twill be a sufficient Defence on this Head against some *unhappy Instances* (too many if but *one*) of *Immoralities* in the *Clergy*, which are so *greedily* *shatched* up, and so vastly *magnify'd* by their *many* and *inveterate Enemies*.

But they are not *civil* enough to *Gentlemen*; and perhaps o' *tother* side, the *Gentlemen* are not *civil* enough to them; tho' indeed that's no sign of their *Gentility*; a Gentleman, as before, knowing very well what respect is due to the *Gown*, let who will wear it, and thence being more ready to overlook and pardon faults, even when they are real, than *magnify* and *deride* 'em, much less

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invent Storys upon Mr. Parson to make *entertainment* for the *next company*. The Clergy are not sure more *insensible* than the rest of Mankind, but feel when they are us'd handsomly or scurvily as well as other *folks*: They have been many of 'em themselves been *born Gentlemen*, and some of *noble-Blood*, nor has a *Gown* alter'd 'em, unless Clergy like *Bastards* should clap a *Cross-Bar* upon their *Scutcheon*, and spoil their *Honour*; which is so far from being true, that I know not why it should not rather add to it, as well as in *Law*, and *Physic*, and even in a higher degree. Nor is a Man, I hope less a Gentleman, because perhaps he has but one 100 a year, and another that's near him 5 or 800, nay who's more common than the *less Estate* the better Gentleman? For how often do we see that neither *Birth* nor *Money* gives *Gentility*, which consists in the *manners*, not any purely external *Qualifications*? A Clergy-man of *sense* will respect a *true Gentleman*, but he must beg the pardon of many who are *call'd* so, if he thinks as little of them as they can of him, and requites their *Scorn* with *piety*. He must again beg their *Worships* pardon if he can't forbear *Smiling* when he sees how *full* and *big* they'll *roll* by, when they come up with a Clergy-man; and how highly they think they *Honour* any of 'em if they condescend to admit 'em into their *Company*, for which they can't do less in *civility* or *Conscience* then fall down and worship them. If worshipful *Patron* should be such a Fool to set up for an *Atheist*, it may be his *Parson* has no more manners than to think him so, and confute some of his *dearly-beloved opinions* when he vents 'em in *Company*, whereas he had been in a fair way to convert 'em all from Christianity, had he but let him run on in the Flood of his *Eloquence* without *opposition*; Much more *unpardonable* still is his *Sin*, if he happen to be *Chaplain* to the *Family*; where if he has the Honour of an *upper-Servant*, let him say he has a *good* place on't; But if he stir one *Inch* further, and pretend to *advise*, much more *contradict* --- Sir *Crape!* withdraw! Know your *distance*, is the word: No *Abigail* at this rate; a fine world indeed, if your Master mayn't be *damn'd* without your *sawcy intermeddling!*

Or if he should be so fortunate to carry dear *Abigail* at last, here's more *mortal Dudgeon* still behind. *Madam Fiddle* is in a terrible *agony* for fear her Maid should come to live as well as her self, or at least wear a *finer* The Paragon Gown is too high for 'em, let 'em *Gown* than the *Mistress* of the *Parish*. O the *ac-* come to honest Woolsey, of their own Spinning, or the old dress of Sackcloth and ashes, *ominable* reigning *Sin* of *Pride*; well these *Parsons Wives* and *Daughters* will certainly sink the Nation.

But is there no way to *hamper* this *Leviathan*? can nothing make him more *humble*? Yes verily, there are divers and good *wholsom* ways to effect it. Unreasonable and unconscionable *Customs*; Difficulty, almost *Impossibility* of recovering just *dues*; *Cheats* of *Parishioners*; mauling him in *Taxes*; clapping *Fanatics* on the *Back*, *Spitting* in their mouths, and *loosing* 'em on against him; and above all, that glorious incomparable *modern Invention*, worth ten times more than all the old ones of *Pancirollus*, *Bonds of Resignation*: Well fare the Soul of honest Sir *Simon*, for saying there's no hurt in 'em; but whether he had or no tis the same thing, they must needs be good they are so very *convenient*; a rare *Instrument* that serves for a *hundred* good uses, and a thousand pities 'tis that all the *Patrons* in *England* han't yet the *Grace* to make use on't; or at least, that all that do should be *Registered* to *posterity*, for their own *Fame*, and the *Examples* of others. The many good uses hereof can scarce be imagin'd: There may be a very convenient parcel of *Glebe* lying near the *Squires Demean Lands*; or 'twould do rarely well to get both that in his own *Hands* and *Tenants* too, *Tithe-free*, or at least the best on't, or to preserve what they have illegally gotten from the Church already: Or they have or may have some crackt *Kinswoman* of their own, tackt on to the *Parsonage*, like a *Grievance* to a *Mony-Bill*, the taking off of whom may be the *honourable Condition* of the aforesaid *Obligation*; or at best, to make the *Incumbent* only *Tenant for Tears*, reserving the *Propriety* for some *Blockhead* of (perhaps) his *Worships* own *begetting*. Or least the *Thing* in *black* shoud grow too *sawey*, and not keep his *Distance* from good *Meat*, or sit close enough to *nasty Drink*, or come over for or against the *King*, *Turk* or *Pope*, as the secret *Wink* or *Tip*, or more open commanding *Nod* shall direct him; his *Hams* bee'nt *supple* enough, nor *Com-kick-me* writ so *legibly* as it ought to be on his *Forehead*; and if such an *Experiment* should be try'd, he'd hardly have the *Civility* of a *French-Ostler*, to make no other *Repartee*, but your *humble Servant*.

But all this you shall have some *spitt* at the very mention of, and assure ye gravely that a *fit* of *Goodness* is come upon 'em, and they have an *extraordinary Call* to *Reform* the *Clergy*, which they are satisfied they can and will do, better than all the *Bishops* in *England*. Which how conscientiously they have perform'd would soon appear upon an exact *Scrutiny*, and even without that by a mans ordinary *observation*, it being impossible but he must have found, if any ways acquainted with the *World*, *Ten* of these *Sparks* who have endeavoured to *Debauch* the *Parson*, to one who has striven to reform him. Tho they are pretty sure themselves not

not to be told of their own *Faults*, when they have thus *Tongue-bolted* those whose *D-ty* tis to do it. This is the *Respect* the English have for their Clergy, (to say nothing of *Simoniackal Contracts*, which are yet *fowler*) this is the civil Treatment they meet with, and that *Tenure* on which they often enjoy what should be their *Free-holds* as much, and more than ere a piece of ground the Patron has, is *his*. Nor will there ever be wanting some needy *Clark* or other to fill up a *Vacancy* on such *Terms*, when before *half-starved* into *slavery*. Nor can any tell where this growing *mischief* will stop unless some *publick Remedy* be provided for t, which, as things are, is not over-likely to be done. Nor is there any Nation in the World, to our *Honour* be it *spoken*, which desires thus to make their Clergy *slaves*, but the English, usurping an *absolute power* over 'em, and by an *unconditional decree*, turning 'em, whenever they please out of House and home by the *Caprice* of one single man, and he oftentimes none of the *wisest*, nor perhaps the *honestest* neither. A most effectual way to *cure* the Clergy of their *Wide* and *small Estates* together.

And thus have I endeavoured fairly to consider the *uppermost* objections which are brought against that *venerable Body* of men, and if upon this last I've been a little more *merry* than the former, 'tis to be partly *even* with them who often find so much *mirth* in *laughing* at those whom they ought to *reverence*. I am not sensible I've advanc'd any thing here which wont *bold water*, either in *Fact* or *Argument* : If I have done any such thing, or wrong'd any *person* or *party*, I profess my self not to have done it out of *malice*, but shall be willing as soon as convinc'd to make em *satisfaction* ; and for what may sometimes appear severe I have *Truth* to bear me out, and I m sure no manner of *hatred* to any of those I write against : Nor do I doubt but the *main* of what is here laid together will stand *firm* and *unmoveable*, even tho' a Clubb of *Jacobites*, *Atheists*, *Republicans*, and *Regicides* should lay their *Heads* together to *answer* it.

FINIS.



C L E R G Y

OF THE

Church of *ENGLAND*.

LICENS'D. D. POPLAR.

Jan. 5. 1695.

L O N D O N,

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THE P R E F A C E.

IT's very probable that some persons, as soon as they cast their Eyes on the Title Page of this Paper, may condemn it for the smallness of the Bulk and Price, and never trouble themselves to look any further, or examin whether the Author talk Truth or Reason; or if they should go nearer, and dip into the Book, immediately throw it away again, as soon as they discover any thing there contrary to any of their own darling Sentiments or Opinions, tho like it well enough when it only blames another's : To the latter of these, if all are but of this mind, the Author desires no fairer acknowledgment of his being in the right; but yet would entreat whoever finds himself concerned, to be no more angry when he reads it, than he was when he wrote it, but as becomes a wise and an honest Man, to consider fairly and impartially the Truth of the Fact which he advances, and the Justness of the consequences he draws from it : For the former objection, the Author is so far from being mortified at it, that he rather wishes both Price and Bulk were less than they are like to be, since thereby this Paper would come into more hands, and be of more general use. The only objection that seems to deserve an Answer is, that one of no Name should be so bold to grasp at so great a Subject, which may perhaps suffer by his weak way of management. But to this it may be answered, that since there are so many little Nameless Fellows, who without any respect either to their own Strength, or Modesty, or Justice, make

The PREFACE.

bold in gross to censure and affront the most venerable and best constituted Body of men in the World, and since these are below the Anger, or perhaps the Notice of the more considerable Pens of that Communion, it may not be amiss to show how easie a matter it is even for one who owns himself of the meanest rank and merit in the Church, to answer the feeble, tho popular Objections of its impotent Adversaries, by Fact to repel Fact, and in a few pages to advance more than they can ever get clear of, in its just Vindication.

A

A BRIEF

A N S W E R

TO SEVERAL

Popular Objections

Against the Present Established

CLERGY, &c.

HAVING a design, as it becomes every honest Man, to do all the Service I can to that Church of which I am a Member, and in order thereunto, to give a clear and breif answer to the most plausible and common objections which by several sorts of people are made against her Clergy, I think it may be proper enough to begin with this true and strange observation, that as Pilat and Herod were made Friends when they acted against the Head of the Church, so are those who succeed in their enmity, when they act against the Body, or any members of it. For let the place, or cause, or pretence be what or where it will, let but any thing be started to the detriment of the Clergy in general, or some one particular person, you shall see all the Parties who were before at Daggers drawing with one another, immediately very good Friends, and conjured as close as possible against one they think their common Enemy. Jacobite and Repulican, Sectary and Atheist, One and All, as soon as the word's given, all hands to work, to pull the Parsons Gown over his Ears, and well if he escapes so too from their Hands.

But since 'tis not possible, nor scarce worth the while, to be present at every *Club* or *Coffee-House*, where this makes up the greatest part of the *Entertainment*; and besides, the *Speakers* there are generally too full of themselves, and the *Stream* runs too strong to admit of any opposition; this way may be more proper to take to task the main of what they urge against that *sacred Order*, tho' many of the Objectors will be found no more opposite to *Truth* than they are to one another; to all of which this *Paper* shall be a *silent Reproof*, if perhaps in those publick places it lies before 'em, and if they would but be at the pains to take it up and read it, they would there find an *Answer* to their *Cavils*, and such matter of *Faith* against themselves, as they would not easily be able to *Answer*.

And first, for the *Jacobites*, those we mean who are *Active*, and make a *Schism* both in Church and State, not the *Passive* who continue in our *Communion*, and tho' they can't comply with the *State* themselves, yet behave themselves modestly and don't censure others. For those who make a *Schism*, what wonder if they have a *Schismatical Spirit*, and revile and bitterly reproach whosoever are of better temper than themselves? With these we are all *Apostates* and *Infidels*, and as verily damn'd as if we were *Circumcis'd*. We are guilty of a mortal sin, because we did not fight for those that would have cut our *Throats*, that dared not, or would not fight for themselves, because we went not to *Faversham* and laid violent Hands on King James when going to France, to keep him by main force from leaving us, after he both in word and writing had commanded all those who consulted him, to go and submit to the then Prince, without any reserve to himself of future Obedience. After this, the *Clergy* as well as all *England* readily took the *Oaths* to those who alone could then protect 'em, their present Majesties, when thoroughly settled in the Throne, by the consent of the Estates of the Realm; and for this they must have changed their Principles, if you'll believe these their good Friends, and denyed whole *Christianity*, so that, were it not for their *Worthy selves*, there would not now be *Faith* found in *England*. All the Arguments drawn from *Reason*, *Necessity*, *Scripture*, the consent of the *Nation*, and the great *Law of Nature*, to vindicate the *Clergy* in taking the *Oaths*, are nothing with them but Improvements on Parsons, Jesuitical or Popish *Evasions*, nothing at all of the Doctrine or Practice of the *Church of England*: And when the *Convocation Book* is brought against 'em, so plain that 'tis impossible to escape the force of it, then either a *Convocation* does not know the meaning of the

Church of England, or we are not to follow them if they do; no, not so much as *Communicate* with any that do so, but they must be to us as *Heathenmen*, and *Publicans*. They'll say, these are old businesses repeated a hundred times over: but why then are they never the better for them, tho they can't answer them, but grow still more full of *rancor* and *malice*, and *bitterness* against their lawful *Governors*, or those who live quietly and peaceably under them, in all *Godliness* and *Honesty*. But still the *Clergy* have changed their *Principles*, supposing this true, as proposed at large, 'tis no *disgrace*, but may be an *Honour*: To leave *mistaken Principles*, (or rather *overstraining* such as are true) as 'tis very difficult, so 'tis very commendable, unless these *Gentlemen* are of that *Mahometan King's* mind, who would not turn *Christian*, because it would argue *Levity*, to quit an opinion he had been born and bred in, and was angry with *St. Paul* for that very Reason. Again, why all the clamor against them, as if they were the only men who had altered their *Judgments*? One would think the *Parliament* had been all *Clergymen*, or else that none but such had made the *Oaths*, and by their example converted all the *Estates* of the *Realm*, and all the *Gentlemen* and *Lawyers* in *England*; whereas indeed they only continue in their *Stations*, and did what became them, and what *Authority* enjoyed them, as concluded in the great *Body* of the *Nation*.

But there's a great deal more than this to be said, both in the *Vindication* of our *Clergy*, and just reproof of them and theirs, whether we regard the *Church* or *State*. In order to which we would ask them these few Questions. First, whether they own the *Protestant Religion* to be the true Religion? (Perhaps they think, as their now *Friends* do, that it is all *Schismatical*, as well as our *Church*). But being so kind to them to suppose they yet own so much as that, I must desire them to go on a little further, and refresh their *Memories* with some passages which they are over-apt to forget. The second question is, whether the late King did not actually design to root out this true Religion in these Kingdoms, had he not gone a great length towards it, and must not have accomplished it, had he not been prevented, when there was hardly more time left than in the less mischievous old *Popish Powder-Treason*? Perhaps these *Witty* good-natured Persons have clearly forgot there was any such thing as *Magdalen-College*-case, or any *Bishops* in the *Tower*, or any *Mas-houses* erected, or any *closeting*, and *carvassing*; or think now that all these were very innocent practices, and nothing either of *Popery* or *Slavery* all the while intended. If they do, we can't help

help it, only desire 'em not to be angry with us for having *better Memories*: But if all this be not enough to convince them, what think they of their late Kings own *Hand writing*, and that to his *Holiness* too. *Justice to Infallibility* (both alike.) See his Letter extracted out of the Register taken at *Dublin*, which none of the Party that we know of, did ever yet deny or object against. Read it your selves (if you yet believe your Eyes), and see whether these very words are not in it. *We do not disown, but that to bring back the Catholick Faith, not only in our three Kingdoms, but over all the dispersed Colonys of our Subjects in America, was our determination.* You must overlook a little *Nonsense*, and throw it on some *Irish Secretary* here, who talks of bringing that back into all the Colonys of *America*, which as to the very most of them, was never there. However what 'tis brought for, is plain, - that King James had made such a *determination*.

A 3d. Question Ple ask them is, Whether the same late *unfortunate Prince* is since that time any ways altered in his *Judgment* and *Resolution* as to those matters? whether he's off of converting his three Kingdoms, and would let us now in Peace enjoy our own Religion, should we be so kind as to let him come back again and recover three Kingdoms, with as much ease as he lost them? Undoubtedly those who are his Friends, and yet han't quite left their Religion, are of that mind, and that should he return, he'd be very good for the future, and desire no more than a *Toleration* of his own Conscience, leaving us to ours: But whether or no they are deceived may be seen by the Treatment which those Protestants who went with him found at *Paris*, who could not by any means obtain a *Chappel* there for the exercise of their Religion, tho it was at that time so very necessary in order to deceive us. But this was in *France*. What did he do in *Ireland*, where he was in his own Power? We must have a care of believing the reports of prejudiced persons, *Williamitish Bishops*, or of whatever dignity or degree, tho Eye-witnesses and actual Sufferers in those *Calamities*. But sure we may still believe that Prince himself, at least when he tells what he has done against us, tho we are at our liberty in what he promises to do for us, and he in the same Letter acknowledges, nay boasts, *That all the Victories he had obtained in Ireland (a small all, St. Patrick knows) he had still turned to the advantage of Religion, and hoped very soon to see it there firmly establishd.* Bringing this as a proof of his former Intention, to have reduced the Catholick Path in to his three Kingdoms, and 'tis, it must be owned, a demonstrative way of arguing, and as the Letter says, there needs no other proof.

But

But what's this to *England*; Might not we have enjoyed our Religion, and the *Scotch* theirs, tho he had left the *Irish* to their own, and so been King of three Religions as well as three Kingdoms. No, nor even that small hope remains, for he adds immediately after: *Nor will it seem hard after We shall be restored, and may it never be till then, tho we know what we are to expect, unless any will say this Letter had any such Heretical design as to impose upon Infallibility, and deceive the Pope himself, as former assurances had done by the Protestants.*

From whence we hope 'tis pretty plain that King *James* had a resolution to introduce Popery, and firmly to establish it in all his Dominions, consequently to prosecute his old design, for which his foolish Secretary was hang'd, of rooting out the Northern Heresies, which design he has not yet alter'd.

A 4th Question I'd ask, should be this, whether in all human probability he had not accomplish'd this design, had he not been just then prevented? And whether it was not the then Prince of *Orange*, our now most gracious Sovereign, who did prevent it, who preserved the true Religion, and delivered us from Popery and Slavery? This I'm sure is as clear as all the rest, and no less clear, that without a Miracle there had been no other way of Deliverance. And it must be further granted that the Interest of the Protestant Religion throughout the whole World is link'd together with his and ours, not to add that of the Civil Liberties not only of *England*, but *Europe*.

Now if this be true, as 'tis all Fact, and must be believed by all that don't believe Transubstantiation; then the *Jacobites* have no other plea to excuse themselves and fault us, than this, *That better the true Religion should be destroyed and Popery firmly established, in England, Scotland, Ireland, all the English Dominions, all the World; better all Europe should be a Slave to the French Tyranny, than the English accept of a deliverer that God had sent 'em, and when they had nothing left to protect 'em, swear Allegiance to this Deliverer.*

Nay, what if 'tis after all easie to prove that the *Jacobites* do what is more than taking such an Oath as this, which we think may be made good against 'em. For 'tis certain they do the same thing, which the Oaths taken by the Clergy and others oblige 'em to, and yet more, only they are so generous as to do both without any such obligation. The Oath obliges to pay such Allegiance to the King as the Laws require. As for example, to serve in the Militia, support the Government, &c. Now all this 'tis plain is done by most of that Party in *England*. They live under the

Protection of the Government, pay Taxes, and yet Double too, (more than we do) to defend it against him they think their *lawful Prince*, and yet tho they grumble at *Taxes*, can find money enough besides, both to raise Contributions, and maintain Conventicles, and these Taxes they all pay, except some very few of them, as appears *freely*, and *voluntarily*, because without *Compulsion*, without *Stress* and *Levy*, whereby they unavoidably own the *Authority* that *levys* it: Nay they do more, for they actually sue for *Debts*, and *Estates*, in Courts which they know *not* by the same *Authority*, and in the names of their present *Majesties*; and how they can do all this which is more than repeating a few words, tho never so *solemn*, and *promising* to do it: how I say, they can do these things with any *consistency* to their own *Principles*, and right reason, and yet fall out with our *Clergy* for doing no more, let they themselves, if they know how, give any tolerable answer.

Nor have we yet done with them, till we have had a few questions about the Church, as well as State, and the first is, Why they *Separate* from us? From the *Body* of the *Clergy*, and Church and *Holy Officer*: when they themselves have so frequently and so severely condemn'd such *separation*? That there's a *Schism* they won't deny, in both senses, *Faction*, and *Separation*. *Conventicle* against *Church*, and *Minor* against *Major*. Nor can they deny that *Schism* is a greivous sin, unless grown a *Theological Score-crow* only, with them two, as well as others. This being granted, the next Question is, *Where it lies*? whether it is of their side or ours, with half a hundred, or a hundred, or 30000? Number they'll say makes but little weight in the *Balance of Conscience* or *Reason*, and 'tis granted if taken singly; but here are other stronger arguments to back it, and then 'tis considerable. What's the reason of this *Separation*? It is enough to clear them, and throw the *Schism* upon us? Do we propose any *unlawful terms of Communion*? But let them show where they are, or what other *Terms* than before. Are we *mistaken*? are our *Clergy* out in a matter of *Politicks*? what is this to, them? Do they think the *Sacraments*, or God's word either lose their efficacy by the *administrators fault*, or *folly*, even supposing all they would have? But they did once know better. Are some *Errors in Faith* or in *Manners*, or even greater *Errors* embraced by many, any *just cause* to forsake a *true Church*? But they have often pleaded the exact *contrary* to all this, and need not be sent to the *Corinthians*, or *Jews* to convince 'em.

Let's go further, have they the example of the late Reverend Archbishop to mislead, or excuse them, who to say nothing of his known Judgment against the late Kings coming back by French assistance, did, as they can't be ignorant of, continue in the Communion of the Church, and that with those of our Clergy, who have themselves taken the Oaths, nor was he himself ever hot or furious in making Proselytes against them: Are any of you better or wiser than He, or more learned, or have you been more disobliged, or what reason or shadow of reason can you give for breaking Communion at this rate, even with him himself, for tearing and rending the Church of God, and all those miseries and inconveniencies which you very well know are the unavoidable consequences of such your separation? You had not so much as him to pretend for your Head, you must own your selves Headless, as well as Schismatical, (unless you'll have Mr. D. in his room). But what do I talk of Archbishops, or Bishops either, when 'tis likely enough that some of their forward Presbyters would be as bad as their words, and if the discontented Bishops should leave them, would yet act without them. Tho indeed, how can either of them act when silenced by authority? are not the Presbyters at least here more Schismatical and Refractory, even than the old Puritanical silenced Ministers, who submitted when inhibited their preaching, tho these will it seems own no such authority, they must not hide their Gifts, woe unto them if they do; the Church stands in great need of them, and many such excuses which they know who have used before them, tho they were never then accounted valid. Besides all this, it were but fair if in the just Vindication of the regular Clergy, we should enquire what sort of people are the chief Seditious among the Non-Jurats, whose Character would not at all credit their Cause. But this must be omitted whatsoever advantage it might give to the Argument, lest a Party quite contrary to these should charge our Communion with all the faults we discover, in those who were once of it, even tho now they have not left it, but hate it, as much as they themselves can do.

However thus much we must take leave to add, that many of those very persons who were most remarkably forward two Reigns since, in Teizing and Vexing all who were not of their opinion, who in the last Reign were wonderfully eager and busie in taking off the Test, in order to establish the Church of England, that these very men, not many of them of the best Morals and fairest Reputation, are now most active and virulent against that Church which once they disgraced by calling her their Mother, though

these her *damifal Children* would now fo fain turn her out oth' *Doors*.

But let their own *Lives* be what they will, you fhall now and then perhaps hear fome of them very deeply concerned for that advantage which *Atheifm* will gain; they tell you, by the prevarication of Clergy, fince thefe are many who feeing them *change their principles*, will conclude Religion is a *Cheat*, and *Priest-craft* from *End to End*.

Now here it fhould be very fair, one would think to ask two or three Questions before thefe perfons quite *unbaptize* themfelves, if they are not in very wonderful hafte to do it. The firft, What *confequence* they can find, for fuch a *conclufion* as this from the Clergies practice? Why if they change their *principles* themfelves, they'll fay it's a fign they don't themfelves *believe a word* of them, and if they don't *believe* them, why fhould we? But here are not above half a dozen *Palladies* as dangerous as any *Rome* or *Hell* could urge, wrapt up in thefe few words. For firft, fuppoſing the Englifh Clergy do change fome of their *Principles* (which yet we have already *denied*, and fhall further prove to the contrary) does it hence follow they *change all*? The very utmoſt that can hence be *drawn* or *wreſted* with any ſhow of reaſon is that they may change others as well as what they have already, and who knew not that before, ſince they are no more *Infallible* than other folks. Again, what's a *principle* in *Poſitics*; in *Law*, out of their *Sphere*, to the *principles* of *Religion*, the great indisputable *points* of *Faith* and *Life*? But ſtill to oblige them, ſuppoſing on that they had done all this, that all the Clergy who have taken the Oaths were what they are pleaſed to make them, *Mahometans* and *Heathens*, and believed none of the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith (tho firſt, a new *Creed* muſt be made, with but two *Articles* in't, *Paſſive-Obedience* and *Non-Resistance*, ſtrained up to the utmoſt indefenſible heights, to which they have ever been carryed), ſuppoſing I ſay all this, yet are not theſe very *wiſe men* to argue on, becauſe they are *Infidels*, ſo will we be too. Have they ſtill ſuch a *dear Love* for them as to be *damnd* for their *Company*, or do they indeed believe no ſuch thing as *Damnation*? Or are there none of their own *pretious party* who are ſtill *light* to the *Cauſe*, and ſo take off the Objection? Or are there no Clergy in the World beſides ours, or no Chriſtianity without the Clergy (tho juſt before there was more in them). See but what endless mazes, *Error* and *Faction* will lead men into, where I ſhould be weary of following them, were't not in hopes to bring them out again. Tho before I leave this Head I muſt beg they'd reſolve

resolve me this one thing, Why so many of their own party, too pious and good for the rest of *England*, have turned *publick Atheists* on this *Revolution*, or at least pretend to be so? Nay, what reason they can give that one of their *greatest and most zealous professors* could find no fitter place to *Earth* in, than the House of a notorious *avowed Atheist*, known for such all over *England*? Why their *greatest men* keep correspondence and write *Apostolical Letters* to such as these? Stiling them, *Brethren in the Lord*, when they believe neither *God* nor *Devil*, *Heaven* nor *Hell*, nor so much as the common notion of *Good* and *Evil*: Or is it the *pure merit* of being *Jacobites* that must atone for *blaspheming* against all the 12 Articles, breaking all the *Ten Commandments*? Nor will it be any better defence that they be ignorant of all this, than if enough for living in a notorious *Bauddy-house*, or keeping a constant and intimate correspondence with some noted Highwayman, after his marks and name have been in the *Gazette*, or *Proclamation*. Those who are concerned know this *Fact* to be true, and if they deny it, it may be easily made appear to the *World* in a much broader manner, which is writ not to *exasperate*, but make them impartially reflect, and see whether our *Clergy* or *theirs* do most encourage *Atheism*.

Nor must the *Atheist*, or *Enemy* to the *revealed Religion* (between whom there is no great difference to be found, either in *discourse* or otherwise, as to their *notions* of, or real reverence for *Almighty God*), they must not expect to have all their *foolish objections* against the *Clergy*, crowded into this little Paper, because they are brought against *common Christianity*. All I'd desire is, that those who are acquainted with any of these *Gentlemen* would observe them close, and I'm mistaken if they don't soon find, that notwithstanding all their clamours against the *Clergy*, and whoever pretends to follow or love them, as *Hypocrites*, and *Impostures*, on the Sense and Reason of mankind, *Sophistical arguers*, and what not; they will in themselves I say, discover that these very persons who make the objection have found the way to reconcile the height of *Hypocrisie*, and the height of *Debauchery*; being for the most part as *immoral* and *fulsomly lewd* as a degenerate Age, that does not *punish* them, a *Devil* whom they don't believe, or their own perverse Inclinations, which they only follow, can make them. And for their Pretences to Reasoning, That never any *Enthusiast* imposed *weaker* and *sillier Sophisms* on the *World*, instead of *Argument*: But I shall leave these to *God's Mercy* on their *Repentance*, after I have challeng'd 'em to shew a *Good Liver* and *thoroughly moral man*, (though that all they pretend to) either con-

James Attehill or Wall; One that's truly modest and humble (which by their leave is a part of morality) and I'll promise immediately to subscribe my self of their *No-Religion*; But we must not expect any attempt so fair from any of their party. All the *Sense, Wit and Learning* in the World, if brought to defend the great and excellent Truths of the Gospel, which according to the Confession of those among 'em, who had a thousand times more sense than all their party that's left, did admirably tend to produce both *solitary and political happiness*, it must still be all *Stuff*, and *Cam*, and *Nonsense*; and by those three powerful Words, for ever silenced and effectually answer'd: But on the contrary, any hodge-podge of *Collections or Quotations*, enough to fire a *Dutch Commentator* to gather, or so much as to read over, any rabble of *nauseous objections* against those sacred Truths, though a thousand times already answer'd, must if they please to espouse them, be immediately no less than the *Tripes of mankind*, or the *Oracles of Reason*; though they therein commit such intolerable *Blunders*, both in *argument and Chronology* as a very School-boy would be ashamed of. However, this must confound all the *Tillotsons and Stillingfleets, Burnets, and Cudworths, and Bentleys* that ever liv'd, nor can they ever indeed forgive the *Clergy* (any more than answer them) for having so often and with such cleanness of expression, sharpness of invention and solid arguments merely overthrown their darling principles: though the best is, as most of them are, an honest man would be proud of their *Ill-word*, as much as ashamed of their *Commendation*, since I never knew any of them to whom that of *Tertullian*, concerning *Nero* on his persecuting the Christians would not exactly agree, *Non nisi grande aliquod bonum quod a Nerone damnatum.*

But enough of these; though it may not be amiss to observe before I leave 'em, that there are Persons of *Atheistical principles* in other Factions of State, besides that of the *Jacobites*, particularly that which appears most opposite to them; and yet in two Things (as before hinted) they very well agree: First, in their *Enmity* to the *Clergy*, and unhandlome Treatment of 'em; and then in their own (at best Sceptical) *Principles*. And one thing here ought not to be forgotten, that though these are of so different and contrary *Factions in Government*, the *Jacobite* can be good *Friends* with the *Republican*; or whatever he is, if they have but the same *No-Creed*, though he mortally hates those who are firm to *Church* as well as *State*; which seems a fair *Intimation* that 'tis not for *Difference of Political Principles, or Changing Principles* either, that the controversy is between them, whatever the pre-

tence may be, but the cause lies deeper, 'tis indeed because one *Believes a God*, and would fain make others do so, and live accordingly: the other either has *positively* persuaded himself that he does not believe any such Being, or else lives at random, and puts all such matters out of his Head, as far as his Conscience and Reason will give him leave to do it.

Not but that 'twould be as uncharitable in Judgment, as false in Fact, to affirm all those persons who don't love the Clergy, were inclin'd to *Atheism*: though thus much is certain, that they who set themselves against them, do thereby extremely encourage that foolish opinion, and the promoters of it. For it has been often observed, that Religion never flourishes long where the regular Clergy is not encouraged and protected, the contrary to which is the inseparable effect of *Debauchery* in Faith and Morals, and too often the fore-runner of some heavy Calamity and just Judgment. And farther it may be affirm'd with sufficient certainty, yet with modesty, that 'tis not easie to find any person of a truly pious Life and exemplarily regular Conversation, who has not that Esteem for the Clergy which their sacred Character and Office exacts and deserves. Nay, the contrary of this appears so odious, even from the Light of Nature, or custom of Nations, that 'tis reckoned by all men a piece of unpardonable rascality and ill-manners to treat 'em otherwise, which no sober Man will be guilty of, who desires to be thought a Gentleman; But this rather makes for the Order in general, than for our own only. To come closer then, it may be now necessary to consider what is most plausibly urg'd against them, by those who are so far from *Atheists*, that too many of them think and call themselves, if not the only, yet the best and purest Professors in the World. And here a Cloud of popular objections appears against them, though the best on't is, that let the Cloud look as black as it will, there is nothing in it but Wind. The first Broadside is a lowd one, and should it hit home would sink 'em to rights without any other. "That they are all a parcel of *Jacobites*, or *well-willers* at least to that Cause and Party. But let's clear all now we are about it; Their good friends urge on, That they were always of a persecuting and malignant Spirit, *Enemies* to the power of Godliness, *Friends* and *Defenders* of *Arbitrary Power*: *Non-resistance*, *Passive-obedience*, and all the Engines of *Tyranny* and *Slavery*. Not to add that they are *Hopshipy-affected* (the old accusation) *Ignorant*, *Ill-preachers*, *Ill-livers*, and particularly proud and sauey to their Superiors and betters. There's enough for once, and no doubt, too many who read this will more warily subscribe to the accusation than consi-

der the *Defence*, which if they could be persuaded calmly to do, they'd in all probability soon run to a better mind.

In order to which, let's first consider that which some have no more *Wit* nor *Honesty* than to urge against them, That they are generally *Jacobites* in their *Hearts*, whatever their outward pretence is.

The *Cunning* of which objection is greater than its *Honesty*, how little soever it has of both: for what has any but God to do with mans *Heart*, or how can it be judged of but by *outward actions*? and what *action* more solemn than an *Oath* in the name of God; Now it's notorious that all the *Church of England Clergy* now *Benefic'd* have taken the *Oaths*, otherwis: they could not be in that capacity, and therefore till any thing appears to the contrary, they are still to be esteem'd firm to the Government, the *Oath of God* being upon them for that reason. But besides, who are they that have writen so frequently, so clearly, and strongly for *submission* and obedience to this Government, if not the Clergy, as well dignified as others: and is't not notorious that *that one mans Book* (never the worse for having been since so severely censur'd) has converted perhaps *thousands* to the taking these *Oaths*, and he has done as much good that way as before by his many other learned and seasonable *Writings*. And if we should make an exact *scrutiny*, I doubt not but that the *Gentlemen of the Clergy* have writ much more on that subject, I believe three to one, than of the *Laity*, though we take in both *Faculties*: Nay they have the *Confession of Enemies*, who judge more fairly than these pretended *Friends*, in their *honourable discommendations*. For in *Ash-ton's Plot* did not the *Memoirs* there produce, acknowledge and complain of the *London Ministers* particularly that they were no *Friends* to their *Cause*, but the worst (that is the best) in the *Nation*: It's true, those *Papers* give a more *partial* and *unjust Judgment* of others of the Clergy, those in the several *Countries of England*, which being so large they might therein easily be mistaken. However we are thus far certain from the *acknowledgment* of an *Enemy*, in such *papers* as we may easily believe were not design'd when writen to see the *Light*, that the *Clergy of London*, by much the most *considerable Body* of any in the *Nation* who bear that character; whether we consider their greater advantages or acquirements, their *happy Converse*, or *Piety* and *Learning*; that these were generally the most *averse* to the cause of the *Jacobites*, and that according to their own observations; and this certainly is the greatest *dishonour* possible to those *Enemies* of our *Countries*, so 'tis the fairest and most authentick *Testimony* in the *Honour* and *Vindication*

dicution of the *Clergy*, and particularly against this Calumny which the contrary party would bespatter them with, that can be desired. I shall close this Head with a consideration of the hard Fortune of *Clergy men*, and the difficult *Scenes* they have to act in an ill-natur'd World, as well in all *changes of State*, where they are generally the first who are struck at, as particularly in this. They are the middle of contending *extreams*, and are upon all occasions buffeted on both sides by those who right or wrong are angry with them or one another. The *Jacobites* as before, says, and swears they are all turn'd *Schismatics*, *Fanatics* and *Rebels*. Others that they are, at least in their *Hearts*, as errant *Jacobites* as any in *St. Germain*: Nay all the *extravagancies* of those men, who hate our very name and *Communion*, must be charg'd on these whom they have forsaken and left; and come what mischief will, the *Church* and *Clergy* must be sure to bear the blame. If the *French Fleet* with three times the number manfully beat one of our *Convoys*, and take some *Ships*: If their *Army* at *Land* double to ours, fall upon us and kill some thousands, though we kill of them double the number: Nay if the *Duke of Savoy*, the *Emperor*, or who will of the *Confederates* be beaten, still 'tis the *Church* is blam'd for all; that's the cause on't, and till that be down, things will never be right. And now I think on't, 'tis great pity none of these *Patriots* have yet hit upon the old experiment, of selling the *Church-Lands* (after the *Impropriations* are quite swallow'd, and if ever these would be digested) to excuse themselves and carry on the *War* more vigorously; or at least treble charging the *Clergy*, who all over *England* have such fat *Benefices*, and lives in such peace and plenty, that they roll in *Money*, and scarce know what to do with it. But of this more anon.

The next accusation is, That the *Church* and *Clergy* of *England* are of a persecuting-malignant Spirit, Enemies to the power of *Godliness*, and so on. But before this is enquir'd into, I would desire the objectors to consider ingeniously to whom under God it is that they owe their present *Liberty*. Whether 'tis not to an *English Parliament*? and whether the *Parliament* be not made up of such as are profess'd Members of the *Church of England*, both *Laitie* and *Clergy*? whether or no this looks like *Persecution*? and whether we could or did obtain any such favour of them when they were themselves in power? After this we must have one or two Questions more, for the clear decision of this matter. First, What is *persecution*? and Secondly, What is the power of *Godliness*? and till these are decided the *Clergy's Enemies* do but fight with the *Air* and beg the Question. 'Tis hard if they

ty of Protestants only, and all the rest be perfectly *dead and carnal*, especially when the *differences* themselves are generally about *Forms and Modes of Worship*: Now if this be certain, it follows that I maybe an *Enemy* to the *extravagancies* of any particular *Party*, nay though they should happen to be in the *right* in the thing wherein they differ from me, without being so to the *power of Godliness*, which consists, if I mistake not, in a true and firm *Faith*, and a Holy Life, not in *words or phrases* or little *distinguishing Characters*, which many lay much more *stress* upon than they are able to bear.

Now for *Persecution*, it cannot I think be taken (in the Ecclesiastical sense of the Word I mean) with any propriety of Speech, "for inflicting *legal punishments* on such as disobey authority in any "indifferent matter, wherein they might without *sin* obey it. For Example, If authority, either from a mistaken or *just jealousy*, forbids such a sort of men from coming within so many miles of such a *City*, or from exercising therein that way of Life in which they were bred, and for their *Disobedience* to such a command they are *punished* by *Imprisonment* or otherwise: I can't for my Life see how this is *persecution*; a *hardship* indeed it may be, and so in some cases are *Taxes, Arrests, &c.* which, yet no man in his *right senses* will call *persecution*. This is certain, the *suffering* for obeying the *Dictates* of a *mistaken Conscience* don't deserve that name, for then all sorts of *Seits* might pretend to that *Honour* and the *Blessing* attending it, as well *Jack a-Layden* when his *Flesh* was pulling off with red hot *Pincers* at *Munster* as *Ravillac* at *Paris*. And saying that a Man is in the *Right*, and suffers for *Righteousness* sake, which I take to be the true Character of *Persecution* (not for *Faſſion* and *Stubborness* and disobedience to his *Superiors*) does not sure make him ever the more in the *right*: And if he be not, at best can go no higher than a *mistaken Conscience*, which where 'tis not wholly voluntary, may something *mitigate*, but can't excuse a *Sin*, much less make the suffering for it *commence a Virtue*.

Having once fix'd these Rules, supposing the *Clergy* for the removing of *Schism* and other *Inconveniences* had been *all* for putting the *Laws* in *Execution* against those who disobey'd 'em; this had not amounted to *Persecution*, unless those who suffer do first prove (all the different, nay *contradictory Seits*) that 'twas for the *Truths* of *Christ* they so *suffer'd*; which I'm sure they can never *all* do, and I'm pretty confident *none* of 'em can, and which till they have done they still do nothing to the purpose.

Not that I would by any thing I've said either vindicate the too great *heat*, I may call it *Fury* of *some Men* in those days, against their *mistaken Brethren*. I am so far from it that I'm ready to doubt, as

our Saviour said to some of his best Disciples in a Case not altogether unlike it, *You know not what Spirit you are of.* We are long since but too certain who 'twas lay behind the Curtain, whose *Hand* was in all this, and that 'twas the Papists play'd some of us against them, and most of them against us, both before and after; while they stood by and laugh'd at us, as they had a great deal of reason. I'm so far I say, from approving such practices as these to bring men to my *mind*, tho' I'm satisf'd, and I hope on good grounds, that I'm in the right, that I much doubt whether *Force* be lawful in any matters of pure *Religion*, and am so far from repining at the Liberty which my (I think) mistaken Brethren enjoy to serve God in their own manner, that I frankly declare (be who will angry) I thank God I live to see that day wherein our Church has given away even the *power* of making use of any other but *Christian* and *manly arguments* to convert her mistaken Children to her Communion. But notwithstanding this concession, and my own opinion (as far as 'twill go) That such *Force* as has been us'd was neither *prudent*, nor so *Christian*: yet I say, it does not follow that the using this *Force* was *Persecution*, any more than that the *Samaritans* had been *persecuted* if the Disciples could have done what they desired, and actually call'd down Fire from Heaven to consume 'em. I further affirm, that far from all, nay or the major part of the *Clergy* of *England* were for such *prosecutions* as these; tho' *exasperated* by all that could work upon *Flesh* and *Blood*, their former *ill usage*, and probable *expectations* of having the same or worse repeated.

And here I can't help it if I make those who are too nearly concern'd in what follows angry with me, since if they are so, I'm sure 'tis only because I tell 'em the *Truth*, and that a Truth necessary for the *Defence* of that good cause I have undertaken, and reasonable too considering the present unchristian *animosities* between them and us. The substance whereof is, "That never was there any Sect of Men who had (I say not *Law*) but so much as *Power* or in their Hands, who have been so moderate in it as the *Church of England*. Never any whose practices, principles, and expressions have not farther transgressed the bounds of *Christian* moderation: Nor do I desire 'em to believe one word of this till I have prov'd it by an Induction from all sorts of Protestants here in *England*, who either have had *Power* in their Hands, or even the bare *prospect*, or sometimes so much as desire of it. What I bring shall be *Fact*, and as far as I know, *authority*; and let those who find their parties *pinch'd* blame them and not me, who am not the Author of the *Facts* or Sayings, but *Relater* only.

We must be forc'd to begin with the *Presbyterians*, and see how they manag'd the Power when they once got it, (by what means we'll not now enquire) both in *Scotland* and *England*.

In *Scotland*, it's certain the *Discipline* of the *Kirk* was higher and more severe than any that was ever practis'd by any *Christians*; unless perhaps the *Inquisition* it self. For whoever disobey'd their *Summons* and refus'd to compeer before them, continuing in that refusal, were excommunicate, and that once done, if any of their *Friends*, or nearest *Relations*, *Wife*, *Husband*, *Child*, *Father*, or whoever did relieve em, tho' but with a bit of *Bread* or cup of *Water*, they were also excommunicated for the same: If this was not in effect a *Sanguinary* as well as an *unnatural Law*, I know not what was; and no such I'm sure was ever made by any of our *Communion*. But no wonder they did this to private persons, when they pretended their power reacht even to *abrogate* Acts of *Parliament*, and discharge *Subjects* of their obedience; than which more was never attempted either by *Pope* or *Council* in all the height of their madness.

There can hardly be more publick Acts than these, but if we are for seeing them or worse reduced into *practices*, nothing can ever flye higher than the *Covenant*, by which they swore to destroy antichristian Prelacy: enjoyn'd by them both in *Scotland* and *England*; and on the penalty to those who refused or but deferred the taking of it, of being esteem'd Enemies to Religion, to the King and Kingdom, and *Confiscation* of all their *Rents* or *Profits*; being made incapable of any *Office* or *Benefit*, appearing before the *Parliament*, and besides all this, receiving such further punishment as should be thought fit.

I'll not yet insist on particular passages or instances only, but first make use of publick acts, by the wisest and greatest of their party; and undoubtedly after the most mature deliberation.

Of which kind was the *Ordinance* of *Parliament* for putting the *Directory* in *Execution*, which expressly enjoyn'd, "That if any person or persons should at any time after the date thereof, use, or cause the *Book of Common-Prayer* to be used in any Church, Chappel, or publick place of Worship, or in any private place or Family within the Kingdom of *England*, &c. every person so offending should for the First offence pay the Sum of Five pounds, for the Second Ten, for the Third suffer a whole years Imprisonment without *Bayl* or *Mainprize*. This is *home*, and 'tis hard that those who refus'd this Liberty of Conscience, nay even to the King himself, even in private Families, and did this without any legal authority or just power, should yet complain of *Severity*, when never

never any thing like this was required of them by the severest Law that ever were made against 'em. Nor was this a *Bagbear* only, but actually put in Execution against those who disobey'd it. Nor will I relate any of those invidious Instances which might be given of the cruelties and hardships the *Clergy* then suffer'd for the sake of their Consciences.

But were the *Independants* any milder when they got into authority and power? Tho' they pretended they would be, we don't find it; for when *Oliver* had turn'd his Masters the *Presbyterians* out of doors, the *Episcopal Clergy* still suffer'd; nor could they by any means be allowed to serve God as their Consciences directed them; even tho' *Address* was made to *Cromwell* by those for whom he pretended to have a great Esteem, to obtain this Ease, which was then granted to the *Jews* themselves, (who 'tis said, were to have had *St. Paul's Cathedral* sold to 'em for a *Synagogue*,) and tho' such Liberty was once promis'd 'em in a good fit by the *Usurper*.

Well then, were the *Anabaptists* any better, when they had any hopes or appearance of getting the Reins, a great part of the Army being of that opinion? I doubt we shan't find 'em so; for to say nothing of their Government in *Munster*, the only place I ever heard of where they were absolute Masters, all those who remember 'em at that time of our Troubles, give such an account of their behaviour as seems far enough from any such moderation. They not only still'd the then Rulers, "Apostatical, illegal, tyrannical and a Sodomitish Generation. Wherein they might not be much mistaken, but positively talkt in their Pulpits, particularly at the Funeral of their great Pendarvis, "That the Lords people must now be "a Bloody-people, that they must up and be doing the Lords work, "it being not now the Dispensation of the Lamb (true enough with "them) but of the Lyon: and this not a Hot-brain'd Zealot or two amongst 'em, but one and all was the Word in that great multitude.

I have given yet but few particular Instances, having confin'd myself more to the actions of whole Partys, and their management towards our Communion; especially of the two former. What work should I then make, if I did but dip into the most famous and authentick Sermons and Writings of those distracted times; which to read would make one suspect some body had imposed upon our Fore-Fathers, and left such expressions in their Books and Names, as the Honesty and Good nature of an Englishman could never be guilty of, nor any other except *Canibals* or *Mad-men*. 'Twas but a moderate expression which *Whitlock* mentions of *Bastwick*, when call'd to give in his Answer concerning the Bishops, in comparison of

of those that followed ; " That the Bishops were neither Servants
 " of God, nor Servants of the King, but *Servants* of the Devil.
 Pretty near akin to the modern Ballad-singer who seems to take
 the hint from hence, when the wretch has the wickedness to say
 of the reverend Body in gross, " Those *Fathers* in God are *Sons*
 ,, of the Devil. But to return, Hogs, Dogs, Wolves, Beasts,
 Priests, Idolaters, Popes, unclean Birds, Antichrists, Robbers, Perse-
 cuters, Murderers, Devils Incarnate, were some few of those many
 handsome Titles bestowed upon 'em : (did they ever hear or read
 such of them in our *Pulpits*, or Books, tho' they chuse out the
 most railing ones, as they call it, that can be found in *England*)
 Nay, Mr. *Cafe's* Zeal went so far, as roundly and positively to as-
 sert in the Press that they had sinn'd the *Sin* against the Holy-Ghost;
 which we hardly dare assert even of the *Regicides* themselves, how
 fair soever they might be for it. We're those for *Toleration*, who
 reverently tell their auditory, tho' a whole Parliament (House of
 Commons I mean,) that this would be no better then " Fight God,
 Fight Devil; Fight Christ Fight Antichrist; and that Liberty of
 Conscience, falsely so call'd, would in time improve itself into Li-
 berty of Estates, Houses, *Wives*, Souls and Bodys; and that the Devil,
 not Christ has his Throne in the pretence of Conscience: Is it
 much of the Spirit of the Gospel, or the power of *Godliness* to preach,
 " That when the Bishops could not be preach'd nor pray'd down,
 " (wherein they were very right) that what the Word could
 " not, the Sword must do; or as other Episcopacy must not only
 be pulled up, but the Bishops *hanged* up before the Lord. Or as *Cafe*
 again, least the Parliament should not have been eager enough,
 " Cursed be he that with-holds his Sword from Blood.

But I'm weary and ashamed, and pray God to convert those
 who applaude such language as this, and are still of the same mind.
 I know here'll be objected to all this, that *Recrimination* is no very
 fair way of *arguing*, since it does not clear me from a *Fault*, that
 I prove another is *guilty* of the same; and besides, that all this is
past, and ought not to be *ript* up again, since it does but *exasperate*,
 and widen the breach among *Protestants*, when we have most need
 to be united against the *Common Enemy*. To the first, it may be
 replied, that *Recrimination* is at least a good argument, *ad*
hominem; sufficient, and indeed the most proper, to silence the
Objecters, when we prove they are guilty of the *same things* where-
 of they accuse us. But yet more: These things are not brought
 purely to *recriminate*, but to prove the proposition just now as-
 serted, That our Church and Clergy when in power, had been more
 moderate than any other sort of people, which was necessary to
 their

their *Vindication*, and which I hope is sufficiently made out. That all this is *past*, we grant, and have reason to thank God that 'tis so, and we hope 'twill never come again. But they never were in power before or since, here in *England*, and, therefore we must be forced to look so far back for Instances, and besides what they object against our *Clergy* is also *past*, unless they think themselves still persecuted. And yet our Church is still uppermost as much as ever; and, 'tis the same way that *Marvel* takes, who goes back as far as the *Star-chamber*, and beginning of the *Wars*, to reflect on those of that Character. For widening Breaches, 'twere heartily to be wisht those were more careful how they did it themselves, who object it against others: Or do they think the Breach may lawfully, or can possibly be widened of our side and not of theirs, by their continued unhandsome *Reflections*, both publick and private, which lest we should make it yet wider, we must by no means wipe off? But there are two further Reasons, which we will were not true, but being so, will come more home than any of the other. Tho first, That we never yet heard of so much as one single person concerned in the worst and blackest actions of those Times, that ever declared they repented, but rather gloried in 'em. I'll instance in that horrid Villany, which makes any true Englishman shudder to hear it, the barbarous Murder of the best King that we ever had. It's true in the last two Reigns they usually shuffed it from one to 'nother, and were not arrived to that height of Impudence publickly to own it, but now in open and avowed affront, not only to the memory of that Excellent and most Pious Prince, and to his Royal Relations now Reigning, but to the Laws of the Nation, for which they pretend so high a Reverence, to say nothing of the Church, which they'd only laugh at, they dare Feast and Revel on that day when all good men meet together to detect and bewail the Tragedy acted upon it, and beg of God that that Innocent and Royal blood may not light upon the Nation. These worst of Barbarians, baser than *Cromwell* himself, won't let that poor Prince rest in his Grave, and this not only the old hardened Wolves, if any of them are yet left, whose muzzels were dypt in his Blood, but even a young Litter, bred up to yelp to the same Note, as if they were affraid they should not have a share in their (impenitent) Fathers Damnation. A just indignation has forced these expressions from me, which none I'm sure will think too much, who is a true member of the Church of *England*; and I doubt not but all who are so will joyn with me therein, when they consider the Cause, and see Ludloms Letter, and other Pamphlets of the same brand still swarming, and so much

made of, and greedily bought up by some men, as if they would faintly *act* the Crime were it in their powers, or were afraid we should suspect them of *Repentance*: and while they won't *forget* these things, but rake anew in the Martyrs ashes, they must blame themselves if we remember 'em too, and censure 'em as they deserve.

Another Reason why these *old things* are brought upon the Stage again, is because the *same party*, where they have had power, have gone as great a Length as they could or durst, towards the *Time practices*. Scotland led the Dance last time, and what they have done now is not *unknown*, and they in vain faintly *palliate*. Are all the *Crys* and *groans* of the injur'd and oppress'd we have heard from thence only form'd in our own *Fancies* and *Imaginations*? Or has not Jack been at his old Sport agen; doing the *work o' the Lord* in the *Deel's* name, and *Mobbing* all such as would not *come over for the Kirk* at the first word of Command? Which was longest ago, the pretended persecution inflicted on others by the *Episcopal party*, or this *real* one suffer'd by them from their *adversaries*? I know it has been said those *Ministers* were all *Ignorant*, *Scandalous*, *Jacobites*, and what not? But had this been true, are the *Rabble* fit *Judges*? for into their *Hands* most of them were *delivered*. And this by the *connivance*, nay encouragement of the *greatest men* amongst them; whose names will undoubtedly be rendered sacred to posterity for their kind *Lists* to that blessed *Reformation* there. Did taking the *Oaths* excuse 'em? no fear of that, and least the *Rabble* should scape some of 'em, *Proclamation* after *Proclamation* must be issued out, and all those who would not plainly tell God-almighty, "That he had for a long time *restrained the presence of his Spirit* in the Conversion of Souls in *poor Scotland*, must turn out without any *Excuse*, or *Delay*, or *Remedy*: (as far as the party could do it, and if any of 'em have had any ease since, no thanks to them:) Nor are these private things, but publick and notorious *Transactions*, that can no more be deny'd than defended. Did not the Mob really turn out great numbers of the *Episcopal Ministers*? Did they not complain long without Redress, tho' *slandered* into the bargain, and many of 'em besides in danger of their *Lives*, after the highest *Indignities* certainly, that ever were offer'd by any *Christians* to a *Christian-Clergy*? And were not the *Actors* rather encouraged than punished for it: Were there not such *Proclamations*; such a *Fact*, even upon the *Lords day* as if so ordered on purpose as an affront to all *regular Christianity*? If this can be deny'd, let it, if not, let those concern'd confess that even such as would be esteem'd the most moderate party among all these who *Dissent* from us, have us'd

our Church and Clergy worse, and that even lately too, and without Law, than ever we did theirs: Nay, tho' we take in the Reign of *Hilton* too, for even then tho' the Mob used to make bold with their *Mietings*, they neither offer'd violence to their *Persons*, nor plundered their *Houses*.

But tho' I'm got so far into *Scotland*, let none expect I should *fool* my *Paper* with any of the *Flowers of Scotch Eloquence*; For I would more gladly have seen that Book answered any other way than by requiring one *Century* with another, there being such *gross* and *soul* things in both, that 'tis pity I think either ever saw the *Light*, and besides, I believe those in *England* do as much excel the *Scotch* in *Preaching*, as in *Temper* and *Living*: Tho I confess 'tis not easy to forbear an *angry Smile*, when one finds some people, after having been so often and justly blam'd and ridicul'd for't, still persisting in and affecting the *same Error*. And 'mapr to think that when Mr. *H---*y of *Cambridg* but this very last year was prevail'd upon to print his *Gospel-Feast*, 'twas some *Enemies* of his, not his *Friends* tho' he tells us so in the *Epistle*, that set him about it: See but his *Bill of Fare* else, whereof he says his *Feast* is compos'd, and let not the Reader call me *profane* for reciting it, whatever he thinks of him for first publishing it. p. 53. The *Supper* says he, is serv'd up in this following Account. "Milk for Babes; Meat for Strong-men; The *Lamb* of God; "The fatted *Calf* for *Prodigals*; The *Marrow* of Rich-*Forgiveness*; The *Feast* of Holiness, or the *Bunch of Hyssop* in Sanctification of the Spirit. The hidden *Manna* of Election; The *Royal Dainties* of Assurance; (among which he reckons the *White Stone*, p. 105. tho' very hard meat.) The *Evangelical-Honeycomb* dropping *Free Grace*. "The *Fatness* of God's house; The *Morsel* of Hope; The *Full-meat* of Contentment; The *Oyl* of Joy; "The *Continual Diet* of perseverance: and a great deal more "on't. And hereonce for all, let no Reader say I'm too *but-r* in this *Paper*, since I let pass even this with more disdain and pity than *Anger*, tho' 'tis not I confess easy to refrain, when such *stuff* is call'd the only *Spiritual-Preaching*; when this is the *Fruit* which, as he tells his Hearers, the *Souls* of so many have lusted after, and no doubt esteem these *better Sermons* than any that have been preached either at *St. Lawrence's* or at *St. Mary's* at least these 30 years.

But 'tis now time to have a little Discourse concerning th^e two dreadful *Bugbears*, *Non-resistance* and *Passive-Obedience*, and the forwardness of the English Clergy to encourage *Papery* and *Tyranny*. And here, were we to deal with *adversaries* that *ingenui*ty could

work on, one would think a frank and ingenious *acknowledgment* of a piece of *human frailty* should be enough to atone for it at the same time 'twas confess'd: but it seems their crime must be meer *malice* & *re-thought*, and not *chance medly*; and nothing but absolute *Perfection* will serve their Turn, either in *Politics* or *Morals*. How fairly and publickly have the *Clergy* of our *Communion* acknowledged, that those *points* may have been *strain'd* too high? And has not Dr. *Sh-----* himself own'd as much, when he says in *Terms*, "That the preaching up *Prerogative*, and *unlimited Passive obedience* so much as it has been of late years, has been a prevailing *mistake*, tho' impos'd by such great *authority* that he thinks 'twas *pardonable*. But it seems some people will neither give the *Clergy* leave to be *mistaken*, nor *amend*, tho' they themselves will take leave never to *amend*, tho' 'tis plain they are so often *mistaken*. And since that seems their *final Resolution*, we must have a little more talk with 'em on this Subject.

It's certain all Christians, even those who make the Objection, do in some sence hold both those principles, now, by many, in gross condemn'd; I mean *Non-Resistance*, and *Passive-Obedience*. Are we not to be *Subject* to the *Higher-Powers*, not for *Wrath*, but *Conscience*: And, as in *Masters*, not only *good* and *gentle*, but also to the *fioward*; or is not this still as good *Scripture* as ever? Does it become a Christian for every slight *injury*, conceiv'd, or really infer'd by *Superiors*, to fly out into *opposition* and *Rebellion*; and at this rate, would there be any *peace* in the *World*; any settled *Government*, or ought besides *Anarchy* and *Confusion*? Does not the *Christian Religion* teach us rather to *suffer* than to *count* it *Evil*? and have not these very persons who make the Objection often pleaded, even in *Terms*, their *Passive-Obedience*, and submitting to what they thought unjust *Penal Laws*, as an excuse for not actively obeying: Nay, carrying this so high as if they thought those *Laws* thereby entirely satisfi'd, tho' the same way of arguing would excuse the greatest *Malefactor*: Thus much then must be granted, that there are such things as *Passive-Obedience*, and *Non-Resistance* in a *sound sence*, and that they are great *Christian Duties*, own'd and acknowledg'd by all parties, tho' generally more pleaded by those below, and more press'd by those above. They were urg'd and press'd formerly by those now so eager against 'em: For in the late times, when the *Anabaptists* were like to get uppermost, our *Texts* were presently brought to bear against 'em: They were told (in *Hugh's* his Book before mentioned, *Edwards* s and twenty others) that they ought not to "despise *Dominions*, speak *Evil* of *Dignity*, or resist the *Powers*. They were minded of prophe-

ciat; " That in the last Days perillous Times should come; For
 " Men should be Lovers of their own selves; disobedient to Pa-
 " rents, (Natural, Political, and Ecclesiastical) Dispersers of
 " others that are good, Traytors, Heady, High-minded, and
 " (which is the misery adds my Author) all this under a Form
 " of Godliness without the power: But 'tis well, as he says before,
 that the " *Ranting Royal-Enemy* was well humbled already, else
 one would have suspected these *malignant Texts* had been brought
 by them to keep under the honest *Presbyterian* and *Independant*,
 (as he styles 'em,) " or which comes to one, the *Godly* not of
 their *persuasion*.

But this has not only been *prest* upon others, by those in power,
 but also pleaded by them in subjection to vindicate themselves,
 and that I believe, very near in the full extent that it has been
strain'd too by any in our Communion. The Dissenters from
 from the establish'd Government, tho not so many as they fancy,
 must yet be own'd a too considerable part in the Body of the
 Nation: These were for some time severely enough handled
 by the *Encouragement* and express *Directions* of those at Helm
 in former Reigns; and that in several cases, as they thought, *con-*
trary to Law: as the pulling down their *Meeting-Houses* by the
 Rabble undoubtedly was. Yet they bore all, they still plead-
 ed their Inoffensiveness, Submission, and *Passive-Obedience* in
 all their *Apologies*. They would be thought in earnest sure in
 this Plea, and that 'twas not want of power only to resist which
 made 'em not do it, but because 'twas really against their
Consciences; otherwise they dealt not fairly either with the
publick or the *Government*; and this was only a *fallacious*, not a
 true Reason of their Submission. Nay, did not the *Non-cons*, of one
 of the most considerable Citys in England, in their address to
 King James, assure him upon the Word of the Godly, " That
 " they abhorred all Rebellion upon a y *pretence whatsoever*; not
 urging as some have done, the Instance of *Hezekiah's* Rebeking a-
 gainst the King of Babylon, in excuse and defence of it.

Besides this, there are two things to be urg'd in mitigation of a
 mistake among our Clergy, if they have too many of 'em, in their
 turns, *over-strain'd* such principles as these in the late Reigns; and
 those are obligations to the Crown, and the just apprehension they had
 of the contrary extreme, and the Doctrines which encourage 'em.
 As for the first, 'tis very well known how politicly and
 closely the State united the Church to it self at the Reforma-
 tion; for which indeed who can blame it: had their been, at
 the same time, but such just provision made for the Clergy as

their office deserves, that Poverty might not have render'd too many of em both contemptible and ignorant. However, the chiefest of the Profits and Honours were reserv'd in the States disposal; and besides we have had, and thanks be to God, still have, such Princes, as protect and love them. Now who can blame them if they are grateful to Benefactors; and what good Man will not pardon them if this Gratitude should in some Instances have carry'd them too far in compliance and obedience, tho never near that length that good A. B. Cranmer went before them; or at worst (utterly to knock this objection down) was it not a more noble and handsome error, than to court the Mob, to stand Cap in Hand to our Sovereign Lord the People, it matters not much whether with Captain Tom or Old Noll or the Head of 'em; which extreme it's certain the contrary party has run into, and still continue in: the preaching, and principles of some men being turn'd exactly to make the people, and humour the Rabble.

And twas the just apprehensions of wise and sober men, that the same party were driving on the same Projects they had formerly, which yet further induc'd many of our Communion (certainly Lay Gent. as well as of the Clergy) to lean too far to the contrary extreme. They knew the only way to make a crooked thing strait, was to bend it farther on the other side than its natural posture; and if they did over-do, and strain it a Thought too far, not resting in the exact individual Arithmetical mean, this however only argues 'em men, and fallible, and was an Error so near the Truth, that is deserves and exacts a much softer treatment than has been given it.

Especially when they found the same principles and practices on Foot, which had not half a Century before, reduc'd us into so much confusion and misery. When 'twas broached, and particularly believ'd, "That the power was in the people; not only fundamentally, or as to specification; neither of these would do the work, but even actually: so that they might call their Masters to account as often as their many-Heads and no-Brains thought convenient. When the Bishops were yelpt against as lowly as in Forty-One, and Lampoons against 'em almost as common as Gazettes, and the hopes and expectations of the adverse party so full and high for the utter ruine of Episcopacy, and re-establishment of their selves or nothing. And whether this was not, for some years after Eighty, the very Creed of the Faction? whether this were in the least doubted among 'em, and were not the common subject of their most pleasing Discourses, I leave to their own Consciences and notorious matter of Fact to testify against 'em. I say the Faction,

on purpose to exclude all those, who tho' they *dissented* from our Church, yet behaved themselves *Christianly* and *modestly*; who meddled not with matters above their own *Sphere*, nor with those that were given to *change*, and for these reasons deserve as much *charity* and *pity*, as the others that *reproof*, and open *reuntes*: It being certainly their *eagerness* and *fury* which drove so many well-meaning men, who lov'd their *Liberty* and *Country* as well as they could do, into the contrary extreme: They thought with reason enough, that *absolute Monarchy* was to be prefera'd before *absolute Anarchy*, a bad Government before none at all; and if they threw themselves at the Feet of a *Lyon* to avoid a whole *Kennel* of *Hounds*, who can blame 'em.

After all, there remains this still to be added in their just defence; that that as they never dealt so *severely* with others *Consciences* as they have done with theirs, so neither did they ever carry *Arbitrary Power* so high as their *adversarys*, who open so hotly against 'em under that pretence. And this will appear if we go back either to the *Times* of our *Fathers*, or those which we ourselves can yet remember. Ship-money 'tis true *might* be, and appears, actually was, arbitrarily impos'd on the Nation, by the King only, on the advice of some great Lawyers, on an eminent *Exigency* for *once* and no more: But were not *Taxes* after *Taxes*, monthly, yearly *levy'd* by the *Tail* of a *Parliament*, nay the very *Rump* of that *Rump*, when not only *King* and *Lords*, were struck off, but at last all even of the *Commons*, that would not go *through-stitch* with whatever *Oliver* or his *Master* would have 'em. But to take yet a *larger Compass*; was not the *Covenant*, as before, impos'd as *arbitrarily* as any thing can be imagin'd, and what party was't that impos'd it, and almost universally took it; or do they think the King alone can be *arbitrary*, and 'tis not in the *power* of any other part of our *Constitution* to be so, if they never so much *desired* it, or let them do what they wou'd. Well, if the case be there, they would still be cast, though we must come a little lower to *convince* 'em. For can they with any modesty affirm that the *Dispencing-Power*, which in effect *destroys* and *vacates* all *Law*, was ever so generally *acknowledg'd* and made use of by our *Clergy* as they were in the latter end of the *Reign* of the late *K. James*? Were ever they such *Enemies* to *Parliaments* (who have so often and so deeply oblig'd 'em) as the *Regulators* were, who would have alter'd the very *Essence* of 'em, and made the *King*, not the *People*, the *Electer*; which wou'd have made it a *Court-Parliament* with a witness, of which many of the same persons are now so much *afraid*; and of which side were those *Regulators*.

tators, of theirs or ours; or do they think our *memories* are so bad that we have already forgotten. I expect 'twill be said, they only accepted a *Benefit* offered 'em, and were thankful for it, without acknowledging any thing of the *Dispensing power*: But this seems very *trivial*; For had they not their *Liberty* only by that *Power*? and must they not as *fairly*, tho' *virtually* thereby own it, as if they had said as much in *Words* at length? Suppose one *Robb* upon the *High-way*, and gives me a part of his *purchase*; am not I *co-partner* with him if I know of the *Robbery*, and yet I not only accept it, but am thankful for it: even supposing to bring the parallel closer, the *true man* who was *Robbed* might have chanc'd to have us'd me hardly in some former Instances? No there's a more ingenious excuse than this, which some of 'em have made, and which better becomes those that have need on't; "That by the severe usage they had formerly met with, they were at first hurry'd into the *cometary extreme*, and pusht a little beyond their *Duty*: This we'll accept, because 'tis but *humane* to do so, but then they must remember to let it *pass* too on other occasions, and to hold for us as well as them; and that our *provocations* were higher than them, as well as without and against all *Law*, has been already prov'd, and cannot be deny'd.

But lest they should again forget all this, and so many thousand yards of *Addresse*, as if well manag'd, will be yet sufficient to supply *St. James's* and *St. Germain's* too with, till the War is over; I must beg leave to refresh their memories with a few remarkable passages in those *Papers*, which by no means ought to be lost, whereby I'm mistaken if it don't appear that our *Church* and *Clergy* are not the only persons who can *Flatter Princes*, when they are kind to 'em and oblige 'em. In these they own'd *K. James* to be "their *Covering-Cherub*, under whose refreshing shadow they promis'd themselves *Rest*: and (not to be ungrateful) promise him also, truly to serve the *Interest* of his *Power* and *Greatness*; "That he had taken care as a *Common Father* for the good of all his *People*; "That he had been in the whole Course of his *Reign*, a *wise* and *merciful King*: (much alike, and both just as true as what follows.) "That they are, for *Monarchy*, as the only ancient *Legal* and *rightful* Government of the Nation. Others thanking him "for his *transcendant* and *unparallel'd Favour*: the latter indeed it might be, for a *Popish Prince* to *Tolerate* his *Protestant Subjects*, but for the former 'tis as 'twas intended. They have made a *Moses* of him for this their wonderful Deliverance from the *Penal Laws* *Egyptian Bondage*; and for the same wish him "all the *Divine Beatitudes* of *God*.

They

They acknowledg that 'twas "Gods miraculous Providence
 " which had preserv'd him by *Sea and Land*, on purpose for this
 " great work : to do great Services, for which the Almighty
 " had design'd him : and this alone is the *Harp to charm down evil*
 " *Spirits*. That the utmost drop of their *Bloud* and expence of
 " their Fortunes should be at his dispose. That they will most faith-
 " fully and ambitiously serve him with their *obedience and Loyalty*.
 " That he's the rightful Father of his *Dominions*. That they'd
 " make him Great throughout all the World. That he was a
 " Prince designed by Heaven for the highest pattern of *Royal Good-*
 " *ness* and true *Policy* ; and that they'd emulate all his other Sub-
 " jects in Loyalty and Obedience : That he was certainly the most
 " tender and affectionate Prince that ever sway'd the Scepter of his
 " Empire, outdoing all the *expectations* and *deserts* of his Subjects :
 " and even here in *London* " That with a constant *Emulation* they'll
 " strive to be most forward and faithful in their *Allegiance*. Praying,
 " that the *Blessings* of Heaven may ever *Crown* him ; that he may have
 " a long, a prosperous, and a glorious Reign : That long may live
 " *James the just* ; Nay, that he may *live for ever*. Nor let any
 " think I wrong 'em in one expression, for they may find all these,
 " and I believe yet grosser in the Addreses for *Burry, St. Edmunds,*
Norwich, Lancashire, Essex, Exon, Leicester-shire, Gloucester-shire,
and Staffordshire.

Well then might K. *James* afterwards declare, " That he was
 " encouraged by multitudes of Addreses, and many other assu-
 " rances of his Subjects, to see this his *Declaration* preserv'd with-
 " out *Destruction*. And we may hence observe the *Injustice* and par-
 " tiality of the two opposite *Factions* in the Nation, one of which,
 " made it a great objection against K. *Charles* the 1st, and his Go-
 " vernment, that he dispens'd with the Laws, and sav'd a few *Priests*,
 " who were accus'd of no other *Crime* but their Religion, and yet
 " they could encourage and accept the same *Dispensing Power*, in a
 " much higher and notorious manner, when they themselves were
 " concern'd in it. The contrary party complain that in the *present*
 " *Reign*, men of *Republican Principles* are too much encouraged ; but
 " let these look back to the latter end of their own dear K. *James*,
 " and see who were then uppermost ; What sort of Men were in
 " his Offices, his *Councils*, his *Closets*, and this will for ever silence
 " that objection, if they have any *modesty* left.

'Tis now time to proceed to the next *accusation* of our Clergy ;
 " that they're of an *ill Life*, and particularly some sort of people
 " blame 'em as over-proud to their Superiors ; sawey with their
 " Betters, carrying it highly even towards *Gentlemen* : the old com-
 " plaint of *Marvel* against em.

For that of their *Ill-Living*, 'tis certainly made at as unlikely a time for the Objectors as is possible, since even the Clergy's most bitter enemys must acknowledge that never were the Episcopal *Sees* better filled since the *Reformation*; and consequently that all the care imaginable will be taken, as in fact 'tis plain that it already is, both to hinder persons of *bad Morals* from entering into the Church, some of which have in this Reign in vain attempted it, and in justly censuring such as have been *scandalous* and *negligent* in their *Charge*. But further, if we may judge of the rest by those of this City, it must be acknowledged that never were the English Clergy more remarkable, either for *good Learning*, or *Exemplary Lives*: and most of the Citys and chief Towns in *England* will I believe, present us with much the same observation. Nor is't to be at all admir'd, if in some *obscure Villages*, where the Clergy hardly can keep the Post of an *ordinary Farmer*, the meanness of the Circumstances and company should in some Instances, debase their *minds*, and there should be found of 'em either less learned, or religious. And besides this, considering the *miserable provision* that's made for their subsistence in so many Parishes, what wonder if men of worth are not so forward to run into such *Holes* and *straw* there; consequently that the *people* and *patrons* must be content with such as they can get, not to add that 'tis oftentimes with them the *worse the better*: As it may happen too sometimes in greater places, where all's left to *popular Elections*, where 'tis no wonder if Mr. *Mob* should chuse one as like *themselves* as they can possibly find, and as we have seen they have really doae in several Instances. If to this we add the constant and dangerous effects of a long *Peace*, and the general decay of *Piety*, which has been for some years *growing* upon the Nation, which can't be suppos'd *wholly* to have escap'd all the Clergy, and that notwithstanding all this, they may compare with any *establish'd Clergy*, either past or present, of this or other Nations; take I say, but all this together, and 'twill be a sufficient Defence on this Head against some *unhappy Instances* (too many if but *one*) of *Immoralities* in the Clergy, which are so *greedily snatched* up, and so vastly *magnify'd* by their *many* and *inveterate Enemies*.

But they are not *civil* enough to *Gentlemen*; and perhaps o' tother side, the *Gentlemen* are not *civil* enough to them; tho' indeed that's no sign of their *Gentility*; a Gentleman, as before, knowing very well what respect is due to the *Gown*, let who will wear it, and thence being more ready to overlook and pardon faults, even when they are *real*, than *magnify* and *devalue* 'em, much less

invent Storys upon Mr. Parson to make *entertainment* for the *next company*. The Clergy are not sure more *insensible* than the rest of Mankind, but feel when they are us'd handsomely or scurvily as well as other *folks*: They have been many of 'em themselves been *born Gentlemen*, and some of *noble-Blood*, nor has a *Gown* alter'd 'em, unless Clergy like *Bastards* should clap a *Cross-Bar* upon their *Scutcheon*, and spoil their *Honour*; which is so far from being true, that I know not why it should not rather add to it, as well as in *Law*, and *Physic*, and even in a higher degree. Nor is a Man, I hope less a Gentleman, because perhaps he has but one 100 a year, and another that's near him 5 or 800, nay what's more common than the *less Estate* the better Gentleman? For how often do we see that neither *Birth* nor *Money* gives *Gentility*, which consists in the *manners*, not any purely external *Qualifications*? A Clergy-man of *sense* will respect a *true Gentleman*, but he must beg the pardon of many who are call'd so, if he thinks as little of them as they can of him, and requites their *Scorn* with *pu-ry*. He must again beg their *Worships* pardon if he can't forbear *Smiling* when he sees how *full* and *big* they'll roll by, when they come up with a Clergy-man; and how highly they think they *Honour* any of 'em if they condescend to admit 'em into their *Company*, for which they can't do less in *civility* or *Conscience* than fall down and worship them. If worshipful *Patron* should be such a Fool to set up for an *Atheist*, it may be his *Parson* has no more manners than to think him so, and confute some of his *dearly-beloved opinions* when he vents 'em in *Company*, whereas he had been in a fair way to convert 'em all from *Christianity*, had he but let him run on in the *Flood* of his *Eloquence* without *opposition*; Much more *unpardonable* still is his *Sin*, if he happen to be *Chaplain* to the *Family*; where if he has the *Honour* of an *upper-Servant*, let him say he has a *good place* on't; But if he stir one *Inch* further, and pretend to *advise*, much more *contradict* -- Sir *Crape!* withdraw! Know your *distance*, is the word: No *Abigail* at this rate; a fine world indeed, if your Master mayn't be *damm'd* without your *sawcy inrermeddling!*

Or if he should be so fortunate to carry dear *Abigail* at last, here's more *mortal Dudgeon* still behind. *Madam Fiddle* is in a terrible *agony* for fear her *Maid* should come to live as well as her self, or at least wear a *finer* The *Paragon Gown* is too high for 'em, let 'em *Gown* than the *Mistress* of the *Parish*. O the abominable reigning *Sin* of *Pride*; well these *Parsons, Wives* and *Daughters* will certainly sink the *Nation*. O the come to honest *Woolsey*, of their own *Spinning*, or the old dress of *Sack-cloth* and *ashes*,

But is there no way to *hamper* this *Leviathan*? can nothing make him more *humble*? Yes verily, there are divers and good *wholsom* ways to effect it. Unreasonable and unconscionable *Customs*; Difficulty, almost *Impossibility* of recovering just *dues*; *Cheats* of *Parishioners*; mauling him in *Taxes*; clapping *Fanaticks* on the *Back*, *Spitting* in their mouths, and *loosing* 'em on against him; and above all, that glorious incomparable *modern Invention*, worth ten times more than all the old ones of *Pancirollus*, *Bonds of Resignation*: Well fare the Soul of honest Sir *Simon*, for saying there's no hurt in 'em; but whether he had or no tis the same thing, they must needs be good they are so very *convenient*; a rare *Instrument* that serves for a *hundred* good uses, and a thousand pities 'tis that all the *Patrons* in *England* han't yet the *Grace* to make use on't; or at least, that all that do should be *Registered* to *posterity*, for their own *Fame*, and the *Examples* of others. The many good uses hereof can scarce be imagin'd: There may be a very *convenient* parcel of *Glebe* lying near the *Squires Demean Lands*; or 'twould do rarely well to get both that in his own *Hands* and *Tenants* too, *Tithe-free*, or at least the best on't, or to preserve what they have illegally gotten from the Church already: Or they have or may have some *cracks Kinswoman* of their own, tack on to the *Parsonage*, like a *Grievance* to a *Mony-Bill*, the taking off of whom may be the *honourable Condition* of the aforesaid *Obligation*; or at best, to make the *Incumbent* only *Tenant* for *Years*, reserving the *Propriety* for some *Blockhead* of (perhaps) his *Worships* own *begetting*. Or least the *Thing* in *black* shou'd grow too *sawey*, and not keep his *Distance* from good *Meat*, or sit close enough to *naffy Drink*, or come over for or against the *King*, *Turk* or *Pope*, as the *secret Wink* or *Tip*, or more open commanding *Nod* shall direct him; his *Hams* bee'nt *supple* enough, nor *Com-kick-me* writ so *legibly* as it ought to be on his *Forehead*; and if such an *Experiment* should be try'd, he'd hardly have the *Civility* of a *French-Ostler*, to make no other *Repartee*, but your *humble Servant*.

But all this you shall have some *spirit* at the very mention of, and assure ye gravely that a *fit* of *Goodness* is come upon 'em, and they have an *extraordinary Call* to *Reform* the *Clergy*, which they are satisfied they can and will do, better than all the *Bishops* in *England*. Which how conscientiously they have perform'd would soon appear upon an exact *Scrutiny*, and even without that by a mans ordinary *observation*, it being impossible but he must have found, if any ways acquainted with the *World*, *Ten* of these *Sparks* who have endeavoured to *Debauch* the *Parson*, to one who has striven to reform him. Tho they are pretty sure themselves

not to be told of their *own Faults*, when they have thus *Torgue-bolled* those whose *Duty* tis to do it. This is the *Respect* the English have for their Clergy, (to say nothing of *Simoniackal Contracts*, which are yet *fowler*) this is the civil Treatment they meet with, and that *Tenure* on which they often *enjoy* what should be their *Free-holds* as much, and more than ere a piece of ground the *Patron* has, is *his*. Nor will there ever be wanting some *needy Clark* or other to fill up a *Vacancy* on such *Terms*, when before *half-starved* into *slavery*. Nor can any tell where this *growing mischief* will stop unless some *publick Remedy* be provided for t, which, as things are, is not over-likely to be done. Nor is there any Nation in the World, to our *Honour* be it *spoken*, which desires thus to make their Clergy *slaves*, but the English, usurping an *absolute power* over 'em, and by an *unconditional decree*, turning 'em, whenever they please out of House and home by the *Caprice* of one single man, and he oftentimes none of the *wisest*, nor perhaps the *honestest* neither. A most effectual way to *cure* the Clergy of their *tride* and small *Estates* together.

And thus have I endeavoured fairly to consider the *uppermost* objections which are brought against that *venerable Body* of men, and if upon this last I've been a little more *merry* than the former, 'tis to be partly *even* with them who often find so much *mirth* in *laughing* at those whom they ought to *reverence*. I am not sensible I've advanc'd any thing here which won't *hold water*, either in *Fact* or *Argument*: If I have done any such thing, or wrong'd any person or party, I profess my self not to have done it out of *malice*, but shall be willing as soon as convinc'd to make em *satisfaction*; and for what may sometimes appear severe, I have *Truth* to bear me out, and I'm sure no manner of *hatred* to any of those I write against: Nor do I doubt but the *main* of what is here laid together will stand *firm* and *unmoveable*, even tho' a Clubb of *Jacobites*, *Atheists*, *Republicans*, and *Regicides* shou'd lay their *Heads* together to *answer* it.

